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# VIGILANTIUS

## AND HIS TIMES.

BY W. S. GILLY, D.D.

CANON OF DURHAM, AND VICAR OF NORHAM.

"Ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν ἣν λέγουσιν αἵρεσιν, οὕτω λατρεύω τῷ πατρῴῳ Θεῷ."
ACTS xxiv. 14.

"NOSTER VIGILANTIUS."
EPIST. PAULINI AD SULPICIUM.

"SANCTUM VIGILANTIUM PRESBYTERUM,"
EPIST. HIERON. AD PAULINUM.

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THE object of the following pages is to illustrate the ecclesiastical errors and corruptions of the fourth century, and to show what sort of opposition was made to them. The author believes that many of those innovations, which have been called *a development of Church principles*, in regard to doctrine and discipline, were departures from the purer Christianity of the Church of the Apostles. He believes also that the calumniated presbyter, Vigilantius, was one of those witnesses, who have been raised up from time to time by divine grace, to bear testimony to the truth, and to be the links of its continuity through ages of rebuke and darkness. There is a succession of Christianity which may be compared to that of Judaism. The genealogies of Israel are lost; the sacerdotal line can no longer be traced up to Aaron; the tribes are scattered through the world; the succession has been interrupted; but the true seed of Abraham cannot perish, nor will the promises in regard to the restoration of Israel be unful-

filled. In like manner, there is a sacred and indestructible line of Christianity, which has continued since our Lord's promise of the duration of his Church, uncorrupted by those who boast of their succession from the Church of the Fathers, the Church of the Schoolmen, and the Church of Rome: often being *in* the visible Church, and yet not *of* it. The Wilderness-Church, and the succession of Witnesses in sackcloth, have been predicted from the first, and this implies a condition the very reverse of Ascendancy, and Supremacy, and Prosperity. The succession of pure Gospel Truth has been perpetuated by despised and humble witnesses, like Vigilantius; as the succession of "another gospel," called *the Development system*, has been perpetuated by bold and able men like Jerome, and the Schoolmen, and the Jesuits.

The author is aware of the difficulties he has had to encounter in producing a volume under the title of 'Vigilantius and his Times.' It must be a very imperfect production at the best, being principally composed out of materials handed down to us by the opponents of the Reformer.

All that he could hope to do was to make a faithful use of these materials, and not to colour or distort them to his own purposes.

Some chronological mistakes have been discovered, since the sheets containing them went through the press; but it is hoped they will not be thought to vitiate the narrative, or to lead to wrong deductions. The reader is requested to cast his eye over the table of *Corrigenda and Addenda*, and to correct the errors there acknowledged, with his pen.

So much variation as to dates occurs in the authorities consulted, that it was next to impossible to escape being misled occasionally. Baronius, Pagi, Tillemont, the Benedictine editors of Jerome, the editors of the works of Paulinus printed at Antwerp in 1622, and those printed at Paris in 1685, together with the French translation of the Letters of Paulinus (Paris, 1703) have been compared, to complete the chronological emendations.

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# CORRIGENDA AND ADDENDA.

Page 19, Note *line* 5, A full stop after deducitur. Begin next sentence with a capital.
— 19, — — 8, *for* Sententia, *read* sententiæ.
— 19, — — 9, A full stop after sacerdote. Begin next sentence with a capital.
— 19, — — 16, A full stop after cogebat. Begin next sentence with a capital.
— 22, *line* 25, *for* neamoins, *read* neanmoins.
— 31, Note — 2, *for* putantut, *read* putant ut.
— 41, — — 8, A colon after complesset.
— 44, — — 7, *for* ipse, *read* ipsi.
— 68, — — 6, *for* sibi, *read* tibi.
— 70, *line* 6, *between* the and towns, *insert* snow-clad.
— 78, Note — 3, *for* addressed, *read* dedicated.
— 79, *line* 22, *after* prayed, *insert* to.
— 81, — 21, *for* 394, *read* 395.
— 83, Note — 5, *for* Diversus, *read* Diversas.
— 86, — — 10, *for* soluti, *read* saluti.
— 88, — — 2, and 6, *for* somnis, *read* somniis.
— 89, — — 5, *for* sustenebant, *read* sustinebant.
— 93, — — 2, *for* exercerer *read* exercerem.
— 96, *line* 27, *for* Chalcidia, *read* Chalcidica, and in *page* 97, *line* 18,
— 100, Note — 2, *for* hunc, *read* hanc.
— 109, *line* — 18, *for* Chalcedon, *read* Chalcidica.
— 113, Note — 10, dele et, *after* feminarum.
— 113 to 124, In the margin, *for* 395, *read* 396.
— 117, Note — 3, *for* utraque *read* utroque.
— 119, *line* 26, *for* 395, *read* 396, and in page 124, *line* 7.
— 123, *line* 4, *for* sent *read* given.
— 129, Note — 15, a colon after cités.
— 129, — — 19, *for* ont *read* sont, and *for* sur *read* sous.
— 132 *line* 10, *for* Phebadius, *read* Phœbadius.
— 153, Note *line* 2, *for* ebetem, *read* hebetem.
— 165, to 203 in the margin, *for* 394, *read* 395.
— 166, *line* 10, *for* 394, *read* 395, in every page.
— 167, Note *line* 9, *for* lesprit, *read* l'esprit.
— 169, — — 1 and 4, a comma after nostri.
— 170, last line, *after* intercourse, *read* with Sulpicius.
— 171, *line* 23, *for* of dead, *read* to dead.
— 173, — 26, *for* associates, *read* associations.
— 176, — 30, *for* build, *read* plan.
— 180, — 10, *for* were, *read* was.
— 187, — 3, *for* relate a few, *read* give a specimen of.
— 188, Note *line* 3, *for* Felicisore, *read* Felicis ore.
— 189, — — 1, *for* prow, *read* stern.
— 191, *line* 2, *for* a more blasphemous tissue of words was, *read* more blasphemous words were.
— 195, — 6, *for Bishop* of Nola, *read* Recluse of Nola.
— 198, — 17, dele ' of the enemy.'
— 205, — 7, *for* 394, *read* 395.
— 206, — 5, *for* 395, *read* 396.
— 325, — 9, *after* which, *read* it.
— 332, — 20, *for* several years before, *read* not many years after.

# VIGILANTIUS AND HIS TIMES.

## CHAP. I.

### INTRODUCTION.

A. D. 350—400.

The Christian biography of the fourth century presents us with some of the most striking characters in Church history.

Great changes in the aspect of society, and rapid movements of the human mind were going on: so much so, that ecclesiastical historians do not agree, as to what term will best define that century. It has been called 'the Nicene age,' 'the age of councils and synods,' 'the golden age of Christian learning,' and 'the dogmatic age.' The two last are perhaps the best definitions which can be used: for it is not easy to point out any other century that has produced so many theological writers of first-rate eminence; whose works have had such a powerful influence, in regulating modes of faith and worship, and in giving expression to the feelings of devotion.

Highest among those who were living in the

A. D. 350—400.

last half of the fourth century, were Athanasius of Alexandria, Basil of Cæsarea, Gregory of Nazianzum, Hilary of Poictiers, Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, Paulinus of Nola, and Jerome, the celebrated reviser of the vulgate, and translator of the bible. What an array of highly-gifted men, honoured in their generation, men whose hope was full of immortality! Their printed works occupy no less than thirty-eight folio volumes; and to the authority of one or other of these an appeal is made, on almost every point of practical, doctrinal, and polemical divinity, which has since divided the opinions of the Christian world. But an age of excitement and controversy, like a stream, which, turning from its true course, traces its direction through unhealthy grounds, cannot roll on, without carrying down in its channel much of that which is turbulent and impure. The fourth century was a period of transition,* between the ascendancy of heathenism, and that of Christianity, in the Roman Empire: and, in the struggle for ascendancy, a lamentable compromise between right and wrong

Corruptions and Errors of the fourth Century.

* Those who contend most strenuously for antiquity, admit that a change took place in the fourth century, from the Christianity of the apostles, to that of the Fathers. See British Magazine, Vol. IX. p. 359. 'Three centuries and more were necessary,' says a writer in this Journal, 'for the infant church to attain her mature and perfect form and due stature. Athanasius, Basil, and Ambrose, are the fully-instructed doctors of her doctrine, morals, and discipline.' According to this hypothesis, Paul, and Peter, and John were infants compared with Ambrose, and we are to receive a new doctrine from the fourth century.

was often made on the part of proselytizing Christians. Recruits rather than converts were obtained for the ranks of the cross; and the frailties, the passions, and the imaginations of men began, at the expense of conscience and truth, to be enlisted in the service of the Church. Objects of worship were disguised and presented under forms more consonant with heathen, than with Gospel ideas of religion: rites similar to those of ancient mythology were introduced: and a breach was opened to every corruption. A. D. 350—400.

It was at the same time, a turning point between scriptural and traditional Christianity: and as much learning and argument were employed, to justify the admixture of mythological ceremonies with evangelical exercises of devotion, as to prove the cardinal verities of the Gospel. In fact, the close of the fourth century is the epoch from which we date the time, when, to use the words of bishop Van Mildert, 'a system of Paganism was engrafted on Christianity;' when the simplicity of the Gospel was sacrificed, in a fearful degree, to pious sophistries; and when the forms of the Pantheon were fatally introduced into the Christian sanctuary.* And here it must be confessed that the undue deference, which has been shown in every age, for 'the learned,' to the neg-

* These men by taking the Greek philosophers to their assistance, in explaining the nature and genius of the gospel, had unhappily turned religion into an art, and their successors the schoolmen, by framing a body of theology out of them, instead of searching for it from the Scriptures, soon after turned it into a trade.—*Warburton.*

A. D. 350—400.

lect of humble and common-sense piety, receives a severe rebuke in the destiny of those churches, which were most rich in polemical theologians. How few of the capitals of Asia and Africa, where ecclesiastical learning flourished so proudly in the fourth century, can now exhibit any vestiges of the Christian establishments, which were the glory of the dogmatic age.

"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." This prophetic saying, to which our Lord referred on two remarkable occasions, had an extraordinary fulfilment at the period we are now discussing. The chief, among "the wise and prudent" of that day, were falling into errors, which had gradually crept into the Church: and the religion, which was at first commended to the world by the simplicity and unbending holiness of its professors, was now promoted by sophistry and false reasoning. Ambrose, who was then at the height of his reputation in the western Church; and Jerome, who was consulted as an oracle, both in that and in the eastern Church; and, even Augustine himself, gave their sanction to practices and opinions, at which "the stones would have cried out," had all who professed to be guided by the Holy Scriptures, held their peace. But, at this crisis, Vigilantius of Aquitain, a young presbyter of obscure origin and lowly condition, began to express doubts as to those devout exercises, which had beguiled men older and abler than himself into creature-worship, and which had rendered them obnoxious

Vigilantius.

to the charge of being '*Cinerarii*,' and 'Idololatræ.' * A. D. 350—400.

This 'Christian brother,' as his adversary Jerome called him, before their celebrated disputes on the subject of saints and relic-worship, was one of those who occupied a foremost place in that doctrinal succession of truth and apostolicity, which has been, under the Divine blessing, the preservation of Christianity. He was a witness, and a connecting link in the golden chain of Protestantism: and it is as absurd to suppose that Protestantism was the growth of a single age, as to imagine that 'Romanism' was the production of any one generation. Succession of Truth.

There are two questions which may be answered by the word '*succession*.'

I. How did Christians get so grievously wrong in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries? By a *succession* of corruptions, and by a gradual departure from the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

II. How did they return to a purer doctrine and practice in the sixteenth century? By a *succession* of struggles for the truth. 'Romanism' did not rise full-grown and full-armed from the sowing of one crop of dragon's teeth; nor did the Reformation spring from the brain of any one individual, like the fabled Minerva

* Hieron. Epist. 37, aliter 53, ad Ripar. The word *Cinerarii* has a doubtful meaning; it may refer to those who dressed up images, or to those who searched among the ashes of the dead for relics.

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from the forehead of Jupiter. It was the production of successive throes and labours, in those who contended for the truth: and Vigilantius of Aquitain, and Claude of Turin, and Waldo of Lyons, and Luther and Cranmer, and our other 'Protestant forefathers,' are only links in the chain, which connects antiquity with the present time. Some of the earliest protests were made against errors *natural* to the heart of man. Affection, equally anxious about the eternal destinies of the dead, as of the living, led even some of St. Paul's converts, the Thessalonians, into mistakes, touching the condition of their friends who had departed in the faith, and concerning the coming of the day of the Lord (See 1 Thess. iv.; 2 Thess. ii.). In process of time, similar affection multiplied errors. To collect the relics of the dead, to keep vigils at the tombs of the saints, to burn lights, and to hold assemblies over their ashes, might be very *natural* means of showing reverence and affection for the departed. But to what gross corruptions did not these things lead? To make vows of perpetual continence, and to drag out a life of self-denial and mortification, may be necessary and praiseworthy upon some occasions, but are celibacy and asceticism to be exalted, as they have been, above all Christian virtues? To pay decent respect to the relics of holy men, and to recal to memory their precepts and examples; to speak of them with veneration, and to pray to be made like unto them: this is always to be commended. But is there any real virtue in the dead bones of

departed saints, or in the remains of their vestments? Or is it lawful to invoke the dead in prayer? What, indeed, is more *natural*, when some dear and venerated object is gone to join in the unseen world the company of just men made perfect, than to cherish the thought, that the beatified spirit will be with our spirit, will pray for us before the throne of grace, and help us in this world of trouble! But for this belief is there any divine authority in the book of Revelation? And if not, may we make it a prescribed article of faith, or recommend it as a beneficial practice? The arm of the Lord is not shortened, and it may yet be his pleasure to display his power by preternatural manifestations, and to show signs and wonders for the extension of his kingdom. But are miracles likely to be of very frequent occurrence? And may not the pious be sometimes deceived by imaginary miracles? Are there not alleged miracles which savour of delusion, and imposture, and the very extravagance of which must excite disbelief?

Such were the doubts and reflections of Vigilantius. His scruples led to serious consideration and enquiry. He passed several years in travelling for the purpose of conferring with the pious and wise of different countries. He expended vast sums of money in the translation and circulation of Scripture. He visited churches, where resistance was made to the corruptions, that prevailed in Rome and in the East. He "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

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And, at length, he openly declared his convictions, and raised his testimony against relic-worship, the invocation of saints, nocturnal services at the sepulchres of the dead, monastic vows, and the obligation of clerical celibacy. For this, he was denounced by some of his contemporaries, as an heretic; although he was never known to deny any of the vital truths of the Gospel, or to oppose himself to the apostolical discipline of the Church: and the Gallic witness of the fourth century is now regarded as one famous or infamous in ecclesiastical history, accordingly as Protestants or Roman Catholics pronounce sentence upon him. Vigilantius was an extraordinary example, not only of perseverance in the pursuit of truth, amidst many difficulties, but also of the obloquy and unfair misrepresentations, to which every enquirer is exposed, who ventures to take part against religious error in high places. He was raised from an humble station, and was introduced to the society of the learned and the good by Sulpicius Severus, and Paulinus of Nola, two of the very best men of the age, whose affection and friendship he never lost. In the first passage, where we find mention made of him by his opponent Jerome, he is called 'The holy presbyter Vigilantius;' and yet, when he undertook to protest against practices, which he regarded as superstitious and unscriptural, Jerome assailed him with every expression of contumely and rancour.* '*Base-born tapster*,' '*Madman*,' '*Brute*,'

* Hieron. adversus Vigilantium. Opera. Vol. IV. p. 2, 288, 289.

'*Monster*,' '*Possessed of an unclean spirit*,' these are specimens of the style in which the recluse of Bethlehem inveighed against the witness of Aquitain. A. D. 350—400.

It will be the object of the following pages to set his character in a true light, and to show what effects were produced in the minds and conduct of sincere Christians, by the opinions, which Vigilantius impugned, and which Jerome advocated.

The biography of the contemporaries of Vigilantius furnishes us with some striking contrasts: and I hope to bring my readers into familiar acquaintance with eminent men of the fourth century, in various situations of life, whose conduct and character exhibited the results of those erroneous views of Christian faith and duty, which are to be traced to that age. If the leaven of superstition worked perniciously in persons of such unquestionable superiority over most of their time, as those whom I have selected to place in contrast, and in juxta-position with Vigilantius, and whom I have endeavoured to pourtray faithfully,—what must not have been its bitter savour in the ignorant and unwary? Martin of Tours, the apostle of Gaul, as he has been called, who was a convert to Christianity from the military ranks, fell into the most deplorable fanaticism and aberration of mind. Instead of continuing to fight as the bold soldier of the cross, in the thick of the action, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, Martin slunk into a monastery, pretended to work miracles, and died in a hermit's cowl. Sulpicius

Martin of Tours.

Sulpicius Severus.

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Severus, the flower of Aquitain, the man of birth and of letters, the Gallic Sallust, the enquiring historian, became, under the influence of this superstition, the victim of deceivableness, and dwindled down to a fabulist and visionary:* and it hurried Paulinus, who was also a man of letters, and a person of amiable disposition, into the most debasing errors. Had Paulinus remained in the high position in which God placed him, his immense wealth might have been used for the improvement of society at large, by the exercise of judicious liberality and alms-giving, in connexion with ecclesiastical objects of interest. But unfortunately, that good man adopted the profession of voluntary poverty; disregarded the obligations of husband, citizen, and Christian statesman, and frittered away life as a deserter from his post of duty. He grovelled before the image of a favourite saint, until his brain reeled, and he was lost in phantasies. He inflicted severities upon himself, to such a degree, that he fell into a state of incurable bodily and mental debility, and scarcely a trace remained of the once buoyant, energetic, and noble-minded Patrician. Sulpicius and Paulinus were lost to the cause of true religion, when they turned their backs on the social duties of life:

Paulinus.

* I shall show more fully in another place, that, although I agree in much that was written in the British Magazine, (Nos. XLVIII. L. and LII.) under the signature H. against Sulpicius, as the Biographer of St. Martin, yet I am disinclined to charge him with deliberate fraud or falsehood. I think he was one of the deceived, and not himself a deceiver.

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they wanted somebody to give them advice similar to that which John Wesley gave to Hannah More, 'Live in the world, that is your sphere of action.' The same erroneous views of Christianity transformed the learned and eloquent Jerome, the most laborious and accomplished scholar of his time, into an acrimonious, discontented, and railing bigot, who, while he professed mortification and abstinence, and confined himself to the sacred localities of Bethlehem, that he might keep his body in subjection, gave full reins to the passions of hatred, malice, and uncharitableness, and indulged the bitterest resentment, whenever a rival was to be encountered, or an adversary silenced.

Jerome.

Plan and object of this work.

The effects of a doctrine or of a system can be ascertained by one method only,—by an appeal to *facts*. It is to facts therefore, to passages in men's lives, that I wish to direct attention: and, if I can shew that, in the case of some very eminent, and very good men of the fourth century, the religious opinions and practices introduced or sanctioned by these persons, spoilt their Christianity, soured their temper, weakened their intellect, disordered their imaginations, and diminished their usefulness; then I have produced *facts*, the best arguments that can be found, against the system or doctrine which has had the authority of their names. The four worthies of the fourth century, whom I have selected for observation, have been chosen for examples, in biographical view with Vigilantius, because he was brought into immediate connexion with them.

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They were not only his contemporaries, and associates, but they had also much to do in the formation of his character, either directly or indirectly, by drawing his attention to religious opinions and observances, and to schools of theology and Church discipline, in which they were the conspicuous masters.

The very points in relation to which Vigilantius protested, and endeavoured to produce a reformation in the Latin Church, were those which were sanctioned and pressed into notice by Martin, Sulpicius Severus, Paulinus and Jerome. It is necessary therefore, by way of preface to the life of Vigilantius, who may be styled 'a forerunner of the Reformation,' and one of the earliest of 'our Protestant* forefathers,' to commence with Biographical Sketches of some of those, who are at the head of that genealogical line, which is contradistinguished as 'Romanism.'

Sulpicius and Paulinus were the patrons and

* I use the word *Protestant* in this place, in the same sense in which Bishop Bull employed it, when speaking of transactions of the eighth century. 'Our Alcuinus, also, the Emperor Charles the Great's tutor, the most learned man of his age, had so fully examined the Nicene Acts, that he wrote a learned discourse about them, and notably refuted them.' He then quotes the testimony of Hoveden, and adds, 'Whence it appears that the Nicene Acts sent from Constantinople to Charles the Great, were by him, before the Francfort synod, sent to Britain; and being examined and abundantly refuted, and that from the Holy Scriptures, by our most learned Alcuinus, were carried back again together with that refutation of them, to the Emperor Charles, *in the name of our Bishops and Princes*; so that even *then* the British Church was *Protestant* in this article concerning image-worship.'—*Corrupt. of the Church of Rome*, p. 40—43.

I have taken this passage from an article in the British Magazine, signed E. C. Harrington. No. CXXXV. p. 182.

friends of Vigilantius; Martin was the pattern after whom they framed their conversation and conduct; and Jerome was the oracle of his day, from whose works we collect almost all that is known of 'the heresy' of Vigilantius, as his testimony to the truth has been most unfairly called. The order, in which I place these introductory sketches, is correct both as to time and subject. A. D. 350—400.

Martin, Bishop of Tours, comes first, because he was the oldest: and, to his influence over the minds of Sulpicius and Paulinus, are to be attributed the erroneous notions of Christian duty, which drew those excellent men out of the path of active life, into monastic seclusion and mortification, and laid the foundation of all their errors.

Biographical notices of the two friends succeed that of Martin: and an outline of the life of Jerome will prepare the reader for the few memorials which remain of Vigilantius himself. I do not profess to write any thing like 'a life' of these Fathers, or to dwell longer on their history than is necessary to show how one false step led to another, and to clear the way for a more perfect understanding of the principal subject of these pages. Martin died before Vigilantius; but the three others outlived him: and I am satisfied with bringing my notice of them down to a period coeval with that in which Vigilantius was a prominent actor.

As I have no pleasure in gloating over the de-

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fects of men, who were the admiration of their times, I shall gladly bring the noble actions and the good qualities of Martin, Sulpicius, Paulinus, and Jerome, into prominent view, whenever I have the opportunity of doing so.

But I shall take care to guard my readers against those of their errors more especially, which, bearing some affinity or resemblance to truth and virtue, were mistaken for such, and therefore became the more dangerous. And I shall endeavour to shew, that it was in consequence of the mistakes of '*saints*' like these, that primitive Christianity declined by little and by little from its original purity and simplicity, until it degenerated into the form called 'Romanism.'

I heartily wish that some abler hand may fill up the outlines, which I have but slightly traced; because a thorough knowledge of ecclesiastical history depends upon the study of contemporary biography. All that is important in theology, and eventful in the position which the church has taken up at different æras, has resulted from the direction given to public thought and action by a very few of the principal writers and hierarchs. It is individual character which is impulsive and productive of great changes; and until we look more closely to the temper, disposition, opinions, views, and performances of the *few* who have taken a lead in every age, we shall continue to have a very imperfect knowledge of the history of the *many*, whether in church or state. Biography therefore, as furnishing us with an insight into the

personal objects of the great actors in the drama of human life, and into the immediate occasions which gave rise to important events, is not only one of the most amusing, but also one of the most instructive branches of literature.

A.D. 350—400.

## CHAP. II.

### MARTIN OF TOURS.

Martin of Tours.

MARTIN was born at Sabaria,* in Pannonia, in the year 317, but received his education in Italy. He was deeply impressed with religious sentiments at a very early age, and, having become a catechumen when only ten years old, his youthful zeal was so inflamed, that he would have retired into the desert, as a boy-hermit, at twelve years of age, had not his wishes been controlled. At fifteen, Martin served in the ranks of Constantine as a soldier of great promise, and the story, of his having divided his cloak with a beggar, tells nobly for the young Christian, who not only displayed sympathy for the destitute, far beyond the character of the age in which he lived, but had the moral courage to perform an act which exposed him to the jeers of his comrades.

In a vision of the night Martin fancied that the

* Hodie Szombatch, or according to Cluverius, Sarvvar.

Saviour appeared to him, clad in the vestment which he had shared with the shivering beggar, and that he heard him repeat in the well-known words of the Gospel, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto me." Such a dream was likely to add intensity to the piety of an enthusiastic youth: and it did so. At eighteen, Martin was baptised. While he was in the army, he confronted the apostate Julian, in a style of manly resolution, which may have been exaggerated, or at least highly coloured, but which must nevertheless have had much in it of heroic reality. Upon an occasion when Julian wished to reward some of his troops, who had distinguished themselves, he assembled them to receive a largess at his hands. When he came to Martin, and offered him the donative, 'I am a Christian,' said the dauntless soldier to his commander, 'give me not a largess, but a discharge from your army. Hitherto I have served under you, now let me serve God as a soldier of Jesus Christ.' Julian, to try him, or to silence him, told him that his request proceeded from cowardice. 'To-morrow,' exclaimed Martin, 'I will rush into the thickest of the fight, unarmed, and in the name of the Lord, and with the sign of the cross, I will penetrate unhurt into the closest phalanx of the foe.' He was put in chains for his bravado, (as it was considered) and would have been compelled to make good his words, had not the enemy sued for, and obtained peace in the interval. During the whole time that Martin continued in the

A. D. 332—337.

Martin in the army.

A. D. 337—367.

army, the beauty of Christian holiness shone forth in his life and conversation. He was kind and forbearing towards his comrades, while he refused to join in any of their polluting amusements or customs: and he secured their affections by acts of self-denial and generosity, of which they felt the benefit, although they could not understand the motive. His patience and humility were said to be beyond all human imitation: by the exercise of extreme frugality, he was able to save enough out of his pay, to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked, and to relieve those who were in debt from their embarrassments. When his military service was at an end, Martin took a journey into his native country for the conversion of his parents, and exposed himself to the resentment of the Arians by vindicating the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. He was banished from the land, after having been nearly scourged to death by the Arians, and returned first to Italy and afterwards to Gaul. The happiest period of his life was when he enjoyed the friendship and instruction of Hilary, Bishop of Poictiers; and, in order that he might remain near him, he resolved to adopt the rules of the Ascetics, and to establish a monastery near Poictiers. This was the first regular conventual institution in France, and it is to the fact of Martin becoming the founder of a monastic house, and effecting many conversions by his reputed sanctity as a monk, that he owes his great celebrity in the French Church, and his appellation of the apostle of Gaul.

The first monastery in France founded by Martin.

A. D. 367—371.

It was here that he began to fancy himself capable of working miracles, and the stories that are told of his miraculous powers, are discreditable both to himself and to the Christian character of the age. If his own head was not turned, he certainly turned the heads of others, as I shall show in the course of these memoirs; and on his authority innumerable pious frauds were received as sacred realities. In 371 Martin was appointed Bishop of Tours, not by a regular and canonical election, due respect being had to fitness, age, and probation, but by the acclamation of the people, and against the judgment of some of the bishops of the province. The history of his consecration* is a record of one of those irregular

Martin raised to the Episcopate.

* 'Sub idem fere tempus ad Episcopatum Turonicæ ecclesiæ petebatur: sed cum erui a monasterio suo facile non posset, Ruricius quidam, unus e civibus, uxoris languore simulato, ad genua illius provolutus, ut egrederetur obtinuit. Ita dispositis jam in itinere civium turbis, sub quadam custodia ad civitatem usq. deducitur mirum in modum incredibilis multitudo non solum ex illo oppido, sed etiam ex vicinis urbibus ad suffragia ferenda convenerat. Una omnium voluntas, eadem vota, eadem que sententia, Martinum Episcopatu esse dignissimum, felicem fore tali Ecclesiam sacerdote, pauci tamen, et nonnulli ex Episcopis, qui ad constituendum antistitem fuerant evocati, impie repugnabant, dicentes: Scilicet contemptibilem esse personam, indignum esse episcopatu, hominem vultu despicabilem, veste sordidum, crine deformem. Ita a populo sententia sanioris hæc illorum irrisa dementia est, qui illustrem virum dum vituperare cupiunt, prædicabant. Nec vero aliud his facere licuit, quam quod populus Domino volente cogebat, inter Episcopos tamen qui affuerant, præcipué Defensor quidam nomine, dicitur restitisse: unde animadversum est, graviter illum lectione prophetica tunc notatum. Nam cum fortuitu lector, cui legendi eo die officium erat, interclusus a populo defuisset, turbatis ministris, dum expectatur qui non aderat, unus e circumstantibus sumpto psalterio, quem primum versum invenit, arripuit. Psal-

A. D. 371—385.

proceedings, for which the Church of the fourth century is greatly to be censured. Certain prelates refused to sanction his exaltation to the episcopate, and are stated to have rested their objections on his despicable aspect, the sordidness of his dress, and his disregard of personal appearance. This looks as if he had rendered himself more conspicuous by his eccentricities, than by judicious acts of zeal, and certainly a man, who was especially remarkable for his inattention to the decencies of dress, and for uncleanliness of person, was not pre-eminently fit to be a bishop.

But the people, the multitude, thought otherwise, and the accidental recital of the second verse of the viiith Psalm,* which sounded like a providential rebuke to *Defensor*, Bishop of Angers, one of those who objected to his consecration, turned the scale

mus autem hic erat: "Ex ore infantium et lactentium perfecisti laudem propter inimicos tuos, ut destruas inimicum et defensorem," quo lecto clamor populi tollitur, pars diversa confunditur. Atque ita habitum est, divino nutu psalmum hunc lectum fuisse, ut testimonium operis sui Defensor audiret, quia ex ore infantium atque lactentium in Martino Domini laude perfecta, et ostensus pariter et destructus est inimicus.' Sul. de Vit. Mart. c. 7.

* See Sul. de Vit. Mart. c. 7. It was thought that this verse applied to the occasion. 'Ex ore infantium et lactentium perfecisti laudem propter inimicos tuos, ut destruas inimicum et *defensorem*. In the vulgate of Sixtus V. and Clemens VIII. we read *ultor*, from Jerome's translation, and not *Defensor*. Some curious questions arise out of this statement. Who were the 'multitudo?' The 'Populus' who elected Martin? Did the common people of this part of Gaul then speak Latin? Did they use the Latin version of the Psalms only, or had they a vernacular version? The vernacular tongue of the south of France,—of Aquitain,—was called Celtic and Gallic by Sulpicius. See Dial. I. c. 20.

in his favour, and he was admitted Bishop of Tours. A. D. 371—385. After his promotion, he still retained the same preference for sordid apparel:* but according to Sulpicius, his biographer, he sustained his authority with dignity, without departing from any of the practices which he had previously adopted. The prelate, however, was for the most part lost in the recluse, and though Tillemont speaks of his success in preaching to the peasantry of the country (Memoires, x. 318), there is strong reason to believe (both from his imperfect education and from the accounts which are handed down to us of his making converts, principally through the opinion entertained of his miraculous performances,) that it was his reputation for sanctity, rather than his persuasive powers as a Christian orator,† which added to the number of his proselytes among the multitude.

Nothing was too extravagant for the credulity of the congregations over which he presided. It was believed that the least morsel of his raiment, the simple mention of his name, or the touch of his cloak, would heal sickness. But, to what-

* 'Eadem in vestitu ejus vilitas erat.' Vit. Mar. c. 7.

† Every thing was ascribed to Martin's *Miraculous* gifts: for it is remarkable that his disciple and biographer Sulpicius speaks in the same passage of his facility in expounding Scripture, his extensive knowledge, and his *illiterateness*. 'Quam alacer, quam efficax, et quam in exsolvendis scripturarum quæstionibus promptus et facilis! Jesum testor, spemque communem, me ex nullius unquam ore tantum scientiæ, tantum ingenii, tam boni et tam puri sermonis audisse. Quamquam in Martini virtutibus quantula est ista laudatio? Nisi quod mirum est, homini *illiterato* ne hanc quidem gratiam defuisse.' —Vit. Mar. c. 26.

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ever cause his influence may be attributed, Martin certainly, in many instances, made a noble use of it, until his mind was weakened by excessive austerities, and he himself began to believe that he was really in possession of the miraculous gifts ascribed to him.

His good acts.

He built churches at Langey, Sonne, Amboise, Chisseau sur le Cher, Tournon, and Candes: * and while he promoted religious observances, he opposed himself generously and resolutely to that spirit of religious intolerance, which was now becoming too common in the Christian Church.

Martin interceded for the Priscillianists, when Ithacius and others were urgent for their condemnation, and he refused to communicate with the intolerant party, after some Priscillianists had been put to death. Tillemont, to his honour be it said, reprobates the severity exercised against these heretics, in terms which I have great pleasure in transcribing. 'Mais aprés qu'il fut parti, Maxime emporté par d'autres evêques, fit juger les Priscillianistes, par le Prefet, et l'Eglise eut la honte de voir repandre leur sang (en l'an 385,) à la poursuite des ministres de ses autels, qui neamoins pour deguiser un peu leur crime, substituèrent enfin un officier seculier en leur place.' †

It would have been happy for the fame of Mar-

* See Hist. Franc. Gregor. Tur. lx. 31, and compare the modern names of the places mentioned by Gregory, as they are given by Tillemont Memoires, x. 319, and by Bouquet, Rec. des Hist. Vol. II. 384.

† Tillemont, Memoires, Vol. X. 326.

tin, and for the honour of the Christian profession, if a veil could have been drawn over some of the events of his declining years, or if he had fallen by the hands of some of the heathen tyrants, whose violence he provoked, before his mind became entirely clouded. When Martin braved the monster Avitien * in his tent, and insisted upon his revoking the bloody order, by which many citizens of Tours had been condemned to die by torture, he was acting the part of a Christian. And it was truly a saint-like action, when the resolute Bishop of Tours set out, with his staff in his hand, to confront Maximus, and to plead for the prisoners and exiles, and the other victims of the Emperor's resentment. It savoured however of that spiritual pride, which has since broken out into so many acts of rebellion against civil authorities, not only on the part of Romish priests and pontiffs, but of others, from whom better things might have been expected, when Martin, upon the same occasion gave Maximus to understand, by passing his drinking cup to a presbyter before he handed it to the Emperor, that Church officers ought to take precedence of all the highest temporal dignitaries.† We desire to give some

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* Sulp. Sev. Dial. III. 5.

† Sulp. Sev. de Vit. B. Martini, c. 23. In several of the editions of Sulpicius, the marginal reading of the passage which records the arrogance of Martin stands thus, ' *Dignitas sacerdotalis regia dignior.*' The words of Sulpicius are, ' Sed Martinus ubi ebibit, pateram presbytero suo tradidit, nullum scilicet existimans digniorem, qui post se biberet: nec integrum sibi fore: si aut regem ipsum, aut eos qui a rege erant proximi, presbytero prætulisset.'

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credit to the glorious things that were told of Martin, when it is said that 'nobody ever saw him give way to anger, sorrow, or levity; that Christ's name was ever upon his lips, and that piety, peace, and compassion, reigned in his heart,' * but the more we read of his estimable qualities, the more we regret the delusions under which he laboured, and the excess to which he carried his asceticism, and his recommendations of it to others. We hesitate not, therefore, to condemn the system which marred a character, that might else have shone among the highest examples of Christian antiquity. The history of this extraordinary man is like a beacon, which displays a revolving light, illuminated on one side, and dark on the other. Its illuminated side is a symbol of encouragement and guidance; its dark side, of danger and alarm. So Martin is to be considered as an example, which speaks in the language of caution, Beware! When we read the eulogies of his admirable qualities by Sulpicius or Paulinus: and pursue the whole of the life of Martin, as it has been given in the biography of the former, or in the metrical narrative of the latter,† we can

His fanatical delusions.

* Sul. Sev. de Vita. Mart. c. 26.

† Sulp. Sev. de Vita Mart. c. 26, and Dial. III. c. 21. Paulinus, De vita Sancti Martini, Lib. 6.

It is doubted by some whether the Paulinus who wrote the metrical life of Martin was the Bishop of Nola. Gregory of Tours imputed it to him. 'Paulinus quoque beatus Nolanæ urbis Episcopus post scriptos quinque libros versu de virtutibus ejus, quos Severus complexus est,' &c. Vide Greg. Turon. Liber primus Miraculorum Sanctissimi Martini, c. 2.

carcely determine which occasions us most grief; A. D. 385—400.
he fanatical hallucinations of the Bishop of Tours,
r the credulity of the historians, who have re-
orded them in seriousness and admiration.

I will now direct the reader's attention to the narginal heads of the life of St. Martin, by Sulpicius, in the '*Bibliotheca Patrum*,' to show that the fame of Martin did not rest so much upon a life of active usefulness, as upon the credit of the miraculous powers and ascetic virtues ascribed to him. The miracles imputed to him.

CHAP.

I. The Military Service of the blessed Martin.
II. He clothes a poor man at Amiens.
Christ appears to Martin.
When he was baptised.
III. He quits the military service and follows Christ.
IV. He goes to St. Hilary.
The parents of Martin were Gentiles.
He is seized by robbers.
He converts a robber.
Devils meet him.
He is scourged for his opposition to the Arians.
He founds a monastery at Milan.
He lives upon roots and Hellebore.
V. He restores his companion, a catechumen, to life.
VI. He restores a man who had hanged himself, to life.
VII. He is raised to the Bishoprick of Tours.
How he lived when he became a Bishop.
He builds a monastery on the Loire.
The system of monastic life.
VIII. He destroys a shrine dedicated to a robber.
IX. He compels a mob of rustics to stand still, and renders them powerless.
X. He destroys some Pagan temples.
He stops the fall of a tree and is unhurt.
He builds temples to God.
XI. His presence arrests the progress of a fire.

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CHAP.

XII. Angels help him to destroy a heathen temple.

XIII. He exposes himself with impunity to the blow of a sword.

XV. He heals a girl with oil.

XVI. He cures a demoniac.

XVII. He cures another demoniac.

XVIII. He eludes the stratagems of demons.

XIX. He heals a leper with a kiss.

XX. A letter from Martin cures one afflicted with ague.

XXI. He heals the eye of Paulinus with a touch, '*tactu penículi.*' [Tillemont translates the word '*piece of cloth.*' Fleury. '*Pencil.*'

XXII. After a fall, he is cured by an angel.

XXIII. The sacerdotal dignity higher than that of kings.

XXIV. He often enjoyed the company of angels.

The Devil invades his cell.

The various forms assumed by the Devil.

XXV. The pretended sanctity of Anatolius exposed by Martin.

The false prophet of Spain detected by Martin.

XXVI. Martin tempted by the Devil, who assumed the appearance of Christ.

The intimacy of the author with Martin.

Martin recommends Sulpicius to imitate the perfect virtue of Paulinus.

It is impossible to explain the great acts of Martin.

A question naturally arises. With such a specimen of credulity before us, can we entertain much respect for Sulpicius as a biographer? Certainly not. But if we put this biography aside, what do we know of Martin? The only contemporary accounts of Martin are found in the pages of Sulpicius, and in the metrical reminiscences of Paulinus, supposing the latter to have been the bishop of Nola. It is quite clear, however, that a history, which dwells so largely upon the miraculous and the fanciful, did so for want of better materials, and because very little of that which was authentic and really worthy of credit,

and of imitation, in the life of St. Martin, had been collected by the biographer.* A. D. 385—400.

Either we know next to nothing of the true history of the Bishop of Tours, or the scraps which have been collected together, furnish us with strange contrasts.

Strange contrasts in the character of Martin.

Such, indeed, if we are to believe Sulpicius, was the mixture of good sense in Martin with the vagaries of a perverted mind, and of real holiness with fabulous pretensions, that it is difficult to draw the line between the saint and the impostor. I will adduce some few examples. In conversation with Sulpicius, Martin acknowledged that he had less of Christian grace in him after he became a Bishop, than before. 'True,' observes Sulpicius, 'before he became a Bishop, he raised two dead men to life, but only one afterwards. We may therefore judge what great works he performed while he was a simple monk.'†

A married soldier who had entered the monastery, importuned Martin to let him have the company of his wife. 'If you were going into battle,' said the saint, 'would you wish to take your wife with you?'

'By no means,' replied the petitioner. 'Then in the same manner,' exclaimed Martin, 'as you would exclude a woman from the battle-field, so should you banish her from a scene of spiritual

* Gregory of Tours speaks with indignation of the doubts as to the veracity of Sulpicius which were entertained in his time, touching the miracles of Martin. De Mar. Mir. Lib. 2. c. 32.

† Sulp. Sev. Dial. II. 5.

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conflict like this.'* Martin could not understand that husband and wife should be inseparable.

At one time it was the boast of Martin that no woman had ever touched him, and it afterwards sadly perplexed some of his disciples that he should have received the attentions of the empress, the consort of Maximus, when she prepared a cell for his reception, gave him water for his hands, and dressed the food which he ate. They were afraid it would derogate from the purity of his character, and be alleged as an example for other saints to permit the too near approach of womankind, within the sacred circle of their presence.

Some whimsical arguments and exceptions in favour of Martin, and in justification of his permitting a female to come near him, are advanced in one of the dialogues of Sulpicius, which it will be more amusing than edifying to read.†

Martin's hallucinations or imposture.

Martin was in the frequent habit of discoursing on the attacks to which he was exposed by Satan and his angels. He related, that on one occasion a form stood before him in the midst of a halo of soft and purple light; he was arrayed in royal vestments; a diadem of gold and jewels was upon his head; golden sandals bound his feet; his countenance was benign and serene, and nothing could be more unlike to Satan than that resplendent presence. 'It is Christ whom thou dost behold,' said the vision,—'I am come to manifest myself unto thee.' Martin was silent. 'Martin,

* Sulp. Sev. Dial. II. 12. † Ibid. II. 7.

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wherefore dost thou doubt? I am Christ.' 'The Lord hath not foretold,' replied Martin, 'that he will come clothed in purple and crowned with gold. I will not believe in the presence of Christ, unless he appears as the crucified, and exhibits the marks which he received on the cross.'

Immediately the apparition vanished, and left such a stench behind him, that it was quite evident it was the devil. This relation Sulpicius declares he received from Martin's own mouth: 'Ex ipsius Martini ore cognovi.'* Well might the wise and good of that day protest,† as they did, against the fables, with which Sulpicius, in his blind confidence in the veracity of Martin, degraded the annals of the Christian church. Martin's example of 'deceiving' others, was soon followed by his disciples, and one, a catechumen, whom he had pretended to raise from the dead, gave this revolting account of his own death and resuscitation. 'He used to tell us,' said Sulpicius, 'that his spirit was conducted before the tribunal of the judge eternal, and was about to receive his sad sentence, when two angels suggested that this was the soul for whom Martin had been praying. Whereupon he was ordered to be taken back by

The consequences of Martin's pretended miracles.

* Hoc ita gestum, ut supra retulimus, ex ipsius Martini ore cognovi, nequis forte existimet fabulosum. Sulp. Sev. de Vita Mart. c. 25.

† Et quia multos ad hanc partem incredulos scio, quippe quos viderim meipso etiam referente non credere: Jesum Testor, etc. Non alii fuere insectatores ejus, licet pauci admodum, non alii tamen quam episcopi ferebantur. Ibid. c. 26.

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these two angels and to be restored to Martin and to life.'*

Martin may have been a truly devoted servant of God, before his brain was disturbed; he may have been charitable, forgiving, and kind-hearted; but we cannot recognize the true 'self-denying spirit,' or 'humility of heart' in a man who in after life built his reputation of sanctity on 'pious frauds' of this kind, nor can we feel sympathy for that species of 'holy zeal'† which a Christian ascetic exhibits in common with the Hindoo Faquir, by frightful austerities and macerations, and other acts of personal infliction.

Martin's opinions as to Antichrist.

The strange opinion which Martin held on the subject of Antichrist, and the end of the world, was another instance of that bewilderment of mind which was not uncommon in this age, when prophetical subjects were discussed with rashness and warmth. 'Before the end of the world,' said Martin in a conversation recorded by his biographer Sulpicius, 'Nero and Antichrist will first come. Nero will exercise sovereign power in the west, and will resume the persecution which he

* 'Idem tamen referre erat solitus, se corpore exutum ad tribunal judicis ductum, deputatumque obscuris locis et vulgaribus turbis tristem excepisse sententiam; tum per duos angelos judici fuisse suggestum hunc esse pro quo Martinus oraret; ita per eosdem angelos se jussum reduci, et Martino redditum, vitæque pristinæ restitutum.'—Sulp. Sev. de Vita Martini, c. 5.

† It is to be regretted that Mr. Palmer, in his 'Compendious Ecclesiastical History,' should have made Martin one of his examples of the 'Fruits of faith,' and of 'holy zeal,' without cautioning his readers against the hallucinations under which the unhappy man laboured long before the close of his life.

began heretofore, to compel the restoration of heathen worship. In the east, Antichrist will establish his power, and make Jerusalem the capital of his empire, after having restored the city and the temple. He will then proclaim himself to be Christ, persecute Christians, and institute the law of circumcision. Nero will be subdued and destroyed by Antichrist; whose sway will extend over the whole world until the second and triumphant advent of the Messiah.' * Such were the wanderings of Martin's imagination, and his wild predictions were not unsupported by opinions, which had been strongly maintained in the preceding ages of the Church. Even among grave thinkers of the fourth century, there were not wanting persons,† who inclined to the idea that St. Paul alluded to Nero, when he said that the "mystery of iniquity" had already begun to work. A. D. 385—400.

Martin will again be introduced in the course of my memorials of Vigilantius. In the mean time, I cannot but feel persuaded, that Sulpicius was the dupe and not the confederate of Martin: it is more likely that he was deceived by Martin's asseverations, and was induced to place reliance on the miraculous tales which were told him, than that he himself invented any of them. In one of his dialogues he candidly admits that the veracity of Sulpicius was the dupe of Martin.

* Sulp. Sev. Dial. II. c. 16.

† See Augustin de Civit. Dei Lib. 20. 'Quidam putantut hoc quod dixit, jam enim mysterium iniquitatis operatur, Neronem voluerit intelligi, cujus jam facta velut Antichristi videbantur; unde nonnulli ipsum resurrecturum et futurum Antichristum suspicantur.'

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his relation was questioned;* but it is scarcely to be believed that he would have ventured to publish such tales immediately after the death of Martin, had it not been notorious that the Bishop of Tours was the author, and that he himself was only the reporter of these tales of the marvellous.

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## NOTE TO CHAPTER II.

My remarks in this sketch of Martin's history will be found to differ very much from those of two contemporary writers, whose works have attracted considerable notice. Mr. Palmer, in his 'Compendious Ecclesiastical History' numbers Martin among the '*holy men*' of the fourth century, who are to be held up to example—whose actions exemplified the '*fruits of faith:*' and in a vindication of this estimate of Martin's character (see Christian Remembrancer for May 1840, vol. xxii, No. 5, p. 283,) he observes that '*the inventions and tales of others ought not to prejudice Martin,*' and adds—'*the statements of Sulpicius with reference to miracles must be viewed with the greatest suspicion. He was obviously a very credulous writer, nor is it possible to depend upon his veracity.*' But credulity was one of the errors of that age, and it was fostered by such as Martin, who had recourse to false expedients to propagate Christianity: and it is my object to shew that the Church, with its corrupt ecclesiastical system of the fourth century, was to blame in countenancing such fraudulent proceedings, and in palming a pack of fables upon an honest and simple-hearted man like Sulpicius.

'With respect to the asceticism objected to Martin,' says Mr. Palmer in the same paper, '*We may admit that he carried mortification too far in some instances, still it was a pardonable error, failing on the side of virtue.*' This favourable view of the unfavourable side of Martin is in accordance with Mr. Palmer's amiable and Christian spirit. But Martin's asceticism was employed to attract notice, and

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* Horreo dicere (Posthumianus loquitur) quod nuper audivi infelicem dixisse, nescio quem, te in illo libro tuo plura mentitum. Dial. I. c. 18.

o make dupes, like Sulpicius, believe, that by virtue of his asceticism e could work miracles of the most extravagant kind, the very extravagance of which was a proof of his false pretensions,—therefore Martin's asceticism was as near akin to vice as to virtue.

The author of '*the Church of the Fathers*,' speaks thus of Martin and Sulpicius. 'The biographer of St. Martin is not merely a friend, who sometimes saw him, *though a great authority in himself*, but a disciple, and intimate, and eye-witness, as well as a man of cultivated and classical mind,—Sulpicius Severus, who wrote his memoir, even while the subject of it was alive, and while his memory was fresh.'—Church of the Fathers, 2nd ed. 1842. p. 386.

'Sulpicius' memoir is full of accounts of miracles wrought by him. He is even said to have raised the dead. I cannot deny that a chance reader would regard his life merely as an early specimen of demonology. Whether the works attributed to him were really miracles, and whether they really took place, I leave to the private judgment of each reader of them. What has been said in former chapters applies here; it is difficult often to draw the line between real and apparent interruptions of the course of nature; and, in an age of miracles, ordinary events will be exaggerated into supernatural: veneration, too, for an individual, will at such a time occasion the ordinary effects of his sagacity or presence of mind to be accounted more than human.'—*Ibid.* p. 389.

Now then how are we to deal with this question, and whom are we to give up? Sulpicius, or Martin? And who was right in his opinion of Sulpicius? Mr. Palmer, or the author of 'the Church of the Fathers?' If we dispute the authority of Sulpicius, we have no genuine contemporary biography of Martin, and he is nothing more than a legendary saint, and therefore not worthy of being held up to the example of Christians.

If we pronounce in favour of the credibility and veracity of Sulpicius, then Martin and his monks must be regarded as guilty of 'pious frauds,' and their's were the fables which we are not to believe. 'It is true,' as Mr. Palmer allows, 'that many signs of the most improbable description are said to have been wrought by him.' And who said this? Sulpicius. Hear then again what the author of 'the Church of the Fathers' advances in commendation of Sulpicius.

'The Memoirs of the saint are written with equal earnestness and simplicity. They were circulated throughout Christendom with astonishing rapidity: but the miraculous accounts they contained were a difficulty with great numbers. Accordingly, in the last of his publications, Sulpicius gave the names of living witnesses in corroboration

of his own statements. ' Far be such suspicion,' he adds, ' from any one who lives under God's eye ; for Martin does not need support from fiction, however I open before Thee, O Christ, the fidelity of my whole narrative, that I have neither said, nor will say, aught but that which I have either seen myself, or have ascertained from plain authorities, or for the most part from his own mouth.' Ibid. p. 399.

Once more, let us turn to what the author of ' the Church of the Fathers ' says about another saint of the fourth century, Jerome, whose name will figure in the sequel of these memorials.

' I do not scruple then to say, that were he not a saint, there are things in his writings and views from which I should shrink ; but as the case stands, I shrink rather from putting myself in opposition to something like a judgment of the Catholic world in favour of his saintly perfection. I cannot indeed force myself to approve or like against my judgment or feeling; but I can receive things on faith against both the one and the other.'—*Ibid.* p. 263, 264.

So then it comes to this, according to the confession of this writer, that the Fathers of the fourth century, or the Catholic world of that age, have presented statements to us which we cannot receive on faith except *against our judgment and feelings.*'

## CHAP. III.

### SULPICIUS SEVERUS.

A. D. 350—390.

THE Historian, Sulpicius Severus,* born about the year 350, was declared, by the universal acclamation of his contemporaries,† to be one of the most accomplished and virtuous men of his age or country. Of noble birth, of great powers of eloquence, and of varied attainments of the very first order, the path to the highest honours of the State lay before him, and he would probably have reached any object of his ambition had he aspired to worldly distinctions. Gibbon calls him 'a correct and original writer;' (Rom. Emp. vol. iii. 26. note.)

Testimonies in favour of Sulpicius.

* Gennadius says that Sulpicius was his family name, but Guiselin, the Editor of his works, published at Antwerp 1574, has expended a great deal of learning, and many ingenious arguments, to prove that Severus was his proper name, and Sulpicius the '*Nomen adscititium, vel prænomen.*' p. 7 and 9. He called himself *Sulpicius.* Dial. II. c. 5 and 13.

† 'Vir genere et literis nobilis.' (Gennadius.) 'Fori celebritate diversans, et facundi nominis palmam tenens.' Paulini Epist. I.

'Nobilitate potens sed multo extensius idem,
Nobilior Christi cultu quam Sanguinis ortu.'—*Paulini Poemata.*

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and even Bayle, with all his sarcasm, felt his heart warm towards this amiable man, and in his short biographical notice of Sulpicius he has nothing to detract from the reputation either of his virtue, or of his talents. On the contrary he has enhanced his merits by the incidental observation, that he was the native of a province at that time the glory of Gaul, as having produced the best poets, the best rhetoricians, and the most famous orators of the whole Roman Empire.*

Sulpicius was qualified to run the race with the ablest of the land, and his early success at the bar was an earnest of his future eminence.

Conformity not conversion.

To add to the inviting prospects before him, Sulpicius married into a noble and wealthy family of consular dignity, one of the first of the patrician houses that embraced Christianity. Whether he was himself a Christian before he married, or whether he conformed to the religion of his wife, is doubtful, but it is likely that his religious profession was at first more a matter of pliant consent, than of entire conviction, and that deeper impressions were made afterwards.† It was become the fashion of the day to declare in favour of the cross;

* 'Il a été illustré par sa naissance, par son eloquence, et plus encore par sa vertu. On ne peut douter qu'il ne fût de la Province d'Aquitaine. En ce tems-là, les Aquitains etoient la fleur, l'ornement, et la gloire de toutes les Gaules, en fait d'Esprit, et d'eloquence. C'etoit dans l'Aquitaine que se rencontroient les meilleurs Poëtes, les meilleurs rhetoriciens, et les plus excellens orateurs de tout l'empire Romain.'—*Bayle, Dictionaire Historique, vide Severe Sul.*

† Paulinus intimates that there was something miraculous in the ultimate conversion of Sulpicius. Epist. I. See Tillemont Memoirs, 14. 69.

ıe Gospel which had formerly forced its way A. D. 350—390.
ıe power of truth, into every condition of
y, and into every department of the State,
ıow the adopted badge of many, who looked
ıperial favour; or whose connection with
tian friends and relatives, rendered it more
:nient and respectable, to worship with the
/ers of the no longer despised Nazarene, than
those of a declining mythology. Power,
h, character and learning, as well as virtue
ɜanctity, were now on the side of the Chris-
; unfortunately however for the purity of
and doctrine, there was a prevailing ten-
/, on the part of the most eminent bishops,
ɔrofessors of the Gospel, to render proselytism
more general, by bringing Christianity, on
points, down to the level of Paganism; when
aim ought to have been to extinguish the
embers of superstition. That the votaries of
:heism might be conciliated, it was thought
dient to leave as many of the old popular
·stitions in practice, as might be varnished
and adapted to Christian worship. That
ıce might not be done to long cherished
s and prejudices, certain helps to devotion, Pagan rites introduced into the Church.
hich the people were accustomed, were re-
d, such as images, pictures, processions,
:, pilgrimages, votive offerings, expiatory per-
ınces, and self-inflicted bodily penances.
e were now, by the consent of Christian
ɔgians, not only tolerated as a concession to
established usages, but in many cases they

A. D. 350-390.

were urged upon the observance of the new proselytes, as meritorious performances: they were prominently commended to notice in the festivals of the Church, and those who formerly rejoiced as heathens in their household gods and local deities, might now, as Christians, call upon their patron saints, and substitute the tombs of the martyrs, for the groves of the '*Dii Indigetes*,' as the scenes of their fond and pious weaknesses. In fact when Sulpicius conformed to Christianity, the rebuke of the Apostle to the people of Athens might have been applied, in the very same words, to those who were degrading the Gospel by their altars and inscriptions. We may judge of the Christianity of Sulpicius, when he first conformed to the ascendant religion, by the opinions and conduct of those who were his early associates.

Doubtful character of many of the proselytes of this period.

That the proselytism, which took place towards the end of the fourth century, was not always conversion, or the result of serious conviction, is manifested in the writings of such authors as Ausonius and Claudian, both of whom were professed Christians. There is something so revolting in the sentiments and language of these two poets, that some critics have made it a question, whether they had embraced Christianity or not. It certainly may very justly be doubted, whether Ausonius * could have received the Gospel in his heart,

Ausonius.

* Baronius honestly confesses of Ausonius, 'Cæterum negari non potest eundem Ausonium tum de diis tum de amatoriis rebus quamplurima cecinisse; ob eamque causam visum esse nonnullis potius Gentilem quam Christianum hominem.' Bar. A. D. 394, c. 77. The Delphin Editors of Claudian were obliged to omit many of his obscene passages.

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:ould have rendered to its mysterious doctrines ' thing more than the homage of his outward re- ct ; when he indulged in such a profane play of rds, upon one of the most awful lessons of divine th, as that which we find in his flattering ad- ss to Valentinian, Gratian and Valens, at the iclusion of a Paschal hymn. Surely that trifler ld have had no true sense of religion, or he uld not, in compliment to the three princes, have :mpted to give an illustration of the majesty of Holy Trinity, by an allusion to this imperial mvirate.* In another poem Ausonius sports h the number *three,* and exhausts all his poeti- ingenuity in ringing changes on it. He speaks the *three* heathen brother gods, and the *three* er goddesses, the *three* points of Jupiter's thun- bolt, the *three* heads of the dog Cerberus, the *ee-fold* egg progeny, Helen, Castor, and Pollux, *three* Fates, the *three* Gorgons, the *three* rpies, and the *three* Sybils, and then he pro- ely sums up with the *Three in One.*

' Ter bibe. Tres numerus super omnia, ter Deus unus.' †

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The lines begin—

' Sancta salutiferi redeunt solemnia Christi.'

nd end thus—

' Trina fides auctore uno, spes certa salutis,
Hunc numerum junctis virtutibus amplectenti.
Tale et terrenis specimen spectatur in oris
Augustus genitor, geminum sator Augustorum.'

Ausonii Versus Paschales, line 22—25. Edyllia 317. Valpy's Delp. Ed. Vol. I. p. 393.

Edyllia 336. Griphus Ternarii Numeri. Line 88. Vol. II. 35.

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Claudian.

The transgressions of Claudian against the Christianity which he professed, are too licentious and obscene to be transcribed, it is enough to say that many of the verses of this man, who addressed hymns * '*to the Saviour*,' '*to the Lord Christ*,' '*to the praise of Christ*,' (and in one of which he ascribed the improvement of society to the triumphs of Christ †) are quite as offensive as the worst productions of the heathen muse. But at the same time it must be remarked, that the outward profession of such men as these, was a proof that the Gospel had at length vindicated its supremacy, even in a temporal point of view. Genius, learning, and rank, all paid homage to that which Marcellinus Ammianus, a Pagan historian of the fourth century, described to be 'the beneficial tendency of the Christian religion,' ‡ and the great, and the wise, and the noble, began to call themselves Christians, and to take pride in the name, before they spiritually understood what they professed.

The world's homage to Christianity.

This prevailing want of true Christian feeling among many professing Christians, must be attributed, first, to the too great readiness, which was now displayed to receive catechumens into the Church, before they had given satisfactory proof of their conscientious belief; and secondly,

* 'In Servatorem.' 'In Christum Dominum.' 'Laus Christi.' 'Miracula Christi.'—Claudian, Valpy, Delp. Ed. Vol. III.

† 'Christe potens rerum, redeuntis conditor ævi,'
'Impia qui nostræ domuisti crimina vitæ.'
Claud. Carm. Pasc. Line 1, 4. Edit. Delp. Valpy. Vol. III.

‡ Mar. Am. xxii. 12.

to the value which was set upon certain doubtful tests of faith and obedience, to the neglect of more unquestionable evidences of conversion. We trace this in the memorials that are come down to us of Sulpicius, of whose Christian life and conduct, we know very little until after the death of his wife, when he was about forty years of age. Up to that period we hear only of the amiable man, and the accomplished scholar: and we are left to conjecture what he would have been, under more judicious guidance and true scriptural instruction. When, after the loss of his wife, he sought for something to sustain his wounded spirit, instead of being taught to cast his whole burthen upon Him who does not willingly afflict the children of men, he was directed to the comfortless austerities of the ascetic,* and was assured, upon the Homœopathic system of theology, that a cure could only be found, by having recourse to excessive and self-imposed deprivations. Phæbadius, bishop of Agen, his friend and countryman, would have been a

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* 'Nam cum olim audita fide ejus, vita atque virtutibus, desiderio illius æstuaremus, gratam nobis ad eum videndum peregrinationem suscepimus.' 'Sermo autem illius non alius apud nos fuit, quam mundi hujus illecebras et sæculi onera reliquenda, ut Dominum Jesum liberi expeditique sequeremur; præstantissimum que nobis præsentium temporum illustris viri Paullini cujus supra mentionem fecimus, exemplum ingerebat, qui summis opibus abjectis, Christum secutus, solus pœne his temporibus Evangelica præcepta complesset illum nobis sequendum, illum clamabat imitandum: beatumque esse præsens sæculum, tantæ fidei virtutisque documento, cum secundum sententiam Domini dives et possidens multa, vendendo omnia et dando pauperibus, quod erat factu impossibile, possibile fecisset exemplo.'—Sul. Sev. De Vit. Mar. c. 26. p. 217.

A. D. 390—394.

better counsellor. But Sulpicius, according to his own account, was a disciple of Martin. It was an unhappy step, when he placed himself under such a master, and it might have been still more fatal, had not the sweetness of his disposition counteracted in some degree the baneful effects of Martin's severe discipline, and degrading system of imposture.* Nothing could entirely change the temper of Sulpicius, or sour the milk of human kindness, which flowed from his heart. But his mind was so susceptible of deep impressions, that after having been weakened by grief, and exposed to the strong restoratives administered by Martin, it was henceforth in perpetual quest of excitement. His correspondence with Paulinus, who was himself contented with nothing short of the most gloomy austerities, helped to keep him in a state of feverish anxiety, as to what he should do next. 'Tears were his drink, and ashes his bread,' to use his own language, and yet the fear haunted him, that he could not propitiate heaven, or secure peace of mind, until he had brought every affection, desire, and feeling into more rigid subjection.

Sulpicius misguided by Martin.

In the year 394, Sulpicius spent some time with the bishop of Tours and his monks at Marmoutier; but I reserve the particulars of that visit for another place in this volume. At present it

* I entirely concur with H., the writer of some admirable articles in the British Magazine, Nos. XLVIII, L, LII, in his condemnation of Martin as an impostor, but I cannot consider Sulpicius to have been anything worse than the victim of fraud and credulity.

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is enough to say, that when he returned home, he devoted himself almost entirely to the practice of austerities, or the compilation of marvellous narratives. His 'Sacra Historia,' or Abbreviations of Sacred History, show what he might have done, had not his mind lost its balance; but hisLife of St. Martin, and his Dialogues, descriptive of the miracles of the bishop of Tours and the hermits of Egypt, were the subjects, which by preference employed his thoughts and his pen, and never did writer with any claims to common sense, indulge such a love of the marvellous and incredible. But while we mourn over the aberration of this good man's mind, it is a consolation to discover, that there were some pious and sensible persons of high rank in the Church, who protested against the fables with which he and others were degrading the annals of Christianity. Neither the works* of these witnesses to the truth are come down to us, nor the names of the works in which they declared against the pretended miracles of St. Martin,† whom they considered to be unworthy of credit, as being either a wilful impostor, or an enthusiast acting under "a strong delusion that he should believe a lie." But though their writings

The credulity of Sulpicius.

* In the works which remain to us, we see antiquity through the medium of those records and writings only, which the ruling party in the Church have allowed to be preserved.—*Goode's Divine Rule of Faith and Practice, I.* 192.

† Quo miserior est regio nostra, quæ tantum virum cum in proximo habuerit, nosse non meruit. Nec tamen huic crimini miscebo populares, soli illum clerici, soli nesciunt sacerdotes. Nec immerito. Nosse illum invidi noluerunt; quia si virtutes illius nossent, sua vitia cognovissent.—*Dial. I. Sulp. Sev. c.* 18.

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are lost, Sulpicius himself has recorded the fact, that there were clergy and bishops of Gaul who questioned the veracity of those statements which he professed to have received from Martin's own lips.* The frequent protestations which the narrator made as to the fidelity of his own account, and the authority of his informants, convince us that he was himself imposed upon, and that his credulity had been most shamefully tried.† We cannot doubt that Martin and the fraternity at Marmoutier had so complete a hold upon his mind, as to induce him to believe all that was told him, and to make him the victim of a strange infatuation. 'Christ is my witness,' said Sulpicius, that I lie not, and who is so sacrilegious,' he asked in the simplicity of his heart, 'as to suppose that Martin would tell a falsehood?'‡

The miracles, which Sulpicius related of the monks of the East, are quite as absurd as those which he ascribed to the apostle of Gaul, and we might suppose that this fondness for the preternatural was the error of the individual, and not of the age in which he lived, if we did not find that men of stronger minds than himself, even such as

* 'Et vero nonnullos experti sumus invidos virtutibus vitæque ejus, qui in illo oderant quod in se non videbant, et quod imitari non valebant. Atque, O nefas dolendum et ingemiscendum! Non alii fuere insectatores ejus, licet pauci admodum, non alii tamen quam episcopi ferebantur.'—*De Vita Martini, Chap. XXVI.*

† Sed tamen totius sermonis fidem apud te, Christe, depromimus, nos nec alia dixisse, nec alia dicturos, quam quæ aut ipse vidimus, aut quæ manifestis auctoribus, vel plerumque ipso referente, cognovimus.'—Dialogi. III. c. v.

‡ Dial. III. c. 14.

Jerome and Augustine,* indulged in the same extravagances. A. D. 394—400.

What are we to think of such legends as the following, seriously and solemnly recorded by a Christian writer, who had obtained no inconsiderable reputation as a man of sense and an historian? Do they not prove that his mind had been weakened through the influence of fanatics, who had opportunities, under the character of men of sanctity, of representing their follies and their falsehoods as sacred truths?

Examples of credulity.

In his dialogues on the virtues of the Egyptian monks, Sulpicius gravely tells us, that a wolf used to come regularly at the hour when a certain hermit went to supper, and received a morsel from the holy man's hand, which he gently licked and caressed. One evening the hermit was absent at supper-time, and the wolf helped himself to one out of five loaves. The hermit on his return suspected who was the thief, and came to a knowledge of the truth, by the evident marks of penitence and grief which the animal testified. †

Another hermit, says this writer, was visited by a lioness, who rolled herself at his feet, and then induced him by her actions to follow her to her den, where he found five full-grown cubs, which were all blind. The hermit prayed, the cubs had sight restored to them, and the lioness, in grati-

* See Augustine's account of more than twenty miracles, which he declares were witnessed by himself. *De Civitate Dei, Lib. XXII, c.* 8.

† De virtutibus Monachorum Orientalium. c. 8.

A. D. 394—400.

tude, brought a skin as a thank-offering to her benefactor, which he afterwards wore for his clothing.*

Obedience to their superiors and the endurance of pain were among the principal virtues of the monks who lived in community, and I am about to relate, said Sulpicius, an incredible instance of obedience. One of these monks boasted, that if his abbot should command him to go into fire, he would not refuse: and he was put to the test. He boldly cast himself into the flames, which retired from him as they did from the three holy children, and left him not only unhurt, but as cool and refreshed as if he had been covered with morning dew.†

I must add one more story, which Sulpicius put into the mouth of Posthumianus, the principal speaker, in his dialogue concerning the virtues of the monks of the East:—'I approached the monasteries of the blessed Antony, which are still inhabited by his disciples, and I directed my steps to the very place, in which the most blessed Paul, the first hermit, passed his time. I beheld the Red Sea; I ascended one of the ridges of Mount Sinai, whose summit nearly reaches Heaven, and cannot be attained. Amidst the recesses of this mountain, an anchorite was said to be still living, who had secluded himself there nearly fifty years, from all intercourse with men: he had no garments, but was covered with long hair, which

* De Virtutibus Monachorum Orientalium, c. 9. † Ibid. c. 13.

served like a divine gift to clothe his nakedness. I was not able to see him myself, though I made many endeavours to find him.* As often as pious men attempted to approach him, he fled into the most retired glens, and thus avoided every communication with his fellow-creatures. One person only had an opportunity of accosting him about five years before, and it was granted to him, as a reward for his extraordinary faith. When the hermit was asked why he avoided men so resolutely, he replied, 'Those who hold intercourse with men, are not likely to be visited by angels.'† A. D. 394—400.

Such were the legends which Sulpicius commended to the attention of Christians, in his celebrated Life of St. Martin, and in his Dialogues on the virtues of St. Martin, and of the Monks of the East. He devoted the hours, stolen from exercises of devotion, to the composition and publication of this species of literature, believing most firmly that he was promoting the cause of his holy religion, by the circulation of tales, which never could have been received otherwise than as fables, if the minds of men had not been prepared for a credulous reception of them, by the erroneous training, which converts to Christianity received from the ecclesiastics of that day. His Life of Popularity of his life of Martin.

* I recommend the reader to compare the praises of Monasticism, and the exhortation to total retirement from the world, as they occur in some of the Christian writings of the fourth century, with the conversation which our Lord held with the apostles, as recorded in St. John xvii.

† De Virt. Mon. Or. c. 11.

A. D. 394—400. Martin was so popular, within a very short time after its publication, that the booksellers and transcribers of Rome* declared, it was the most profitable work with which they had ever been concerned. Copies of it were sought with the greatest possible avidity, and found their way into the remotest provinces of the empire. Paulinus of Nola, as the friend of the author, naturally did everything in his power to push the book into notice. It was read as much in Carthage and Alexandria as in Rome; it found its way to Memphis and Thebes, and to the deserts beyond, even during the lifetime of Sulpicius; and the very possession of the book seemed a favourable introduction to the traveller, who carried it about with him. And no wonder that it was thus popular, for, independently of the marvellous, which in all ages has charms for general readers, there is something in the style of Sulpicius so extremely attractive and amusing, that it cannot fail of arresting attention. A shrewd writer, Du Pin, speaking of his Dialogues, has pronounced that it is impossible to lay them down, without reading them to the end, when once you have begun them. The form of a dialogue was professedly adopted by Sulpicius, to render his narrative the more agreeable; but while he admitted that this was his object, he as-

* 'Librarii.' This curious bibliopolical anecdote is related by Sulpicius himself.—*Dialogi. Lib. I. c.* 16.

Forty years after it was first written, it continued to be universally read. 'Vita Martini ab omnibus legitur.'—*See Uranii Epist. ad Pacatum.*

:d most strenuously, that every incident he :ed was true.* A. D. 394—400.

'e cannot but censure the misdirected labours iis accomplished scholar; we cannot but regret duties left undone by this ardent and sincere istian; we cannot but condemn the false colour- given by him, whom we desire to consider a -hearted man, to superstitious observances: we are constrained to ask in sorrow, what ıt not such an attractive writer as Sulpicius : done for the advancement of Christian know- e, had he not been led captive by the love of marvellous? And what might he not have :ted, by his example and generous devotedness ıe cause of the Gospel, had he not been bound l and foot as the victim of asceticism? To ık from the temptations and profligacies of the d was commendable, but to run away as he from positive duties, and to shut himself up in retreat at Primuliac, was an act of desertion. he mixed more with men, and carried his many ıes into public life, what a beautiful form of istianity would he have exhibited in his own on! And how he would have enlarged his mind, and corrected his confined notions, e he improved those of his associates! Had ı a man as he is described to have been, moved sionally from the bosom of a peaceful and ious family, into the midst of society, how he

Ceterum etsi dialogi speciem, quo ad relevandum fastidium lectio etur, assumpsimus, nos pie præstare profitemur historiæ veri- '—*Dial. III. c. 5.*

A. D. 394—400.

would have rebuked vice and encouraged virtue! 'His domestics,' said Paulinus, 'flourish like olive-branches round about his table, and when they speak of him to me, they dwell with inexpressible pleasure on the beautiful example of his life and conversation, on the heavenly wisdom of his discourses, and on the benignity of the Master, who is ever "anointing their heads with the oil of gladness." *

I dwell with delight on the lovely traits in the character of Sulpicius, and as I would rather leave him in light than in shade, I will not dismiss him without some further notice of his good actions. His virtues were those of the man, and of the gospel of Jesus Christ: his faults were those of a defective and erroneous view of Christianity, seen through the medium of a vicious ecclesiastical system.

Church-building promoted by Sulpicius.

Sulpicius was one of the first to improve the style of church building in country places. In large towns and cities, some of the most splendid temples and basilicæ, even before his time, had been dedicated to purposes of Christian worship, but the small towns and villages remained for the most part totally or insufficiently provided with church accommodation, and this had a great tendency to keep the peasantry in a state of religious ignorance. We find Ausonius boasting of the conveniences and comforts of his villa at Noverum, (Nouliers) near Santorum (Saintes), but there was no sanctuary nearer than Bordeaux, a distance of

* Epist. Paul. c. 14.

more than fifty miles, where he could attend the public ordinances at the great festivals of the Christian church, which were now giving their names to the season of the year.* A. D. 394—400.

The agricultural population continued to be *pagans* or *village heathens*, because they had few opportunities of hearing the gospel preached, or of having their piety quickened by social worship. In one of the dialogues of Sulpicius, mention is made of a village church of such small dimensions that it is compared to a hermit's cell. 'We went with him to the church, which was at the distance of about two miles, and was hidden from our sight by a ridge of the mountains. It was built of branches of trees wattled together, and was not much better than the habitation of our host, in which nobody could stand upright.' †

Sulpicius was satisfied at first, with a small chapel at Primuliac, (where he principally resided after the year 395,) in the modest style of domestic architecture, but when the number of believers on

* This is distinctly stated several times by the poet in his Epistles.

'Burdigalæ molles liquimus illecebras:
'Instantis revocant quia nos solennia Paschæ.'

*Ausonii VIII. l.* 2, 9.

'Nos etenim primis sanctum post Pascha diebus
'Visere avemus agrum.'

*Ibid. Epist. XVI.* 17, 18.

In Epistle XXIV. Ausonius speaks of the *Ecclesia* of his village, 'Celebrique frequens ecclesia vico.' The Delphin annotators think his was a village church. If so, it must have been little more than a shrine or oratory, too small for the Easter solemnities. The churches said to have been built by St. Martin at Langey, Sonne, &c. &c. (see page 22), were most likely of the same size and character.

† Dial. de Virtutibus, Mon. Orien. c. 2.

A. D. 394—400.

his estate increased, he proceeded to augment the consecrated structure, and to build another for the benefit of the neighbourhood; and in the spirit of David, he was anxious to spare no expense for the enlargement and adornment of the house of God. We learn from the letters of Paulinus, (11 and 12,) that the churches built by Sulpicius, both at Primuliac and at Eluso also, were not only more costly than his own, but that they must have formed the model upon which many cathedral and conventual establishments were afterwards constructed. At Primuliac, if I understand Paulinus correctly,* Sulpicius erected a baptistry between his domestic chapel and the public church, and connected the whole by colonnades and corridors.† Among other decorations were the pictures of Martin and Paulinus, placed opposite to each other in the baptistry, and herein we discern a marked step made towards that fatal introduction of image-worship, which the council at Eliberis ‡ (Elvira in Grenada) had foreseen, and attempted to prevent, nearly one hundred years before, by its prohibition of paintings on the walls of churches. Such an erroneous mode of testify-

* Vide Epist. Paul. 11 and 12.

† Paulinus describes the form and purpose of this sacred edifice, 'Ecce velut trino,' &c. See Epist. XII. p. 144, and the French Edition.—*Lettres de Paulinus*, 483.

‡ The authors of 'L'Art de verifier les dates,' place this council as far back as the year 277; by others it is assigned to 303 and 305, 324 and 325. See Dissert. 21. Natal. Alexand. de Concil. Illiberitano. Vol. VI. pp. 320, 326. This council prohibited many things which afterwards came into practice in the Christian Church, and were denounced by Vigilantius.

ing his affection for his two friends, did most assuredly savour more of heathen adulation, than of Christian respect, and it was followed by other proceedings, which show how fast the professors of a pure and simple faith were lapsing into superstition. Sulpicius deposited the remains of St. Clair under one of the altars of his church, to give a greater odour of sanctity to the place, or to use the words of Paulinus: * A. D. 394—400.

'Sancta sub æternis altaribus ossa quiescunt:
Ut dum casta pio referuntur munera Christo,
Divinis sacris animæ jungantur odores.'

The French translators of the epistles of Paulinus understood it in this sense, for they have thus translated the verses:

'Les os sont enfermez sous l'enclos de l'autel,
Ou, quand s'offre au seigneur l'holocauste immortel,
L'odeur de ses vertus en tous lieux reverées
Se joint au doux parfum des offrandes sacrées.' †

To add to the treasury of merits, with which Sulpicius supposed his church buildings were enriched by the portraits of Martin and Paulinus, and by the dead body of St. Clair, he begged some relics of Paulinus, and obtained from him a piece of the true cross, as it was supposed. The precious gift was sent with a letter, so truly descriptive of the superstitious fancies of the age, that I am tempted to give it at full length.‡

It does not enter into the plan of this work to

* Epist. Paul. 12. † Les Lettres de Paulin. p. 485.
‡ See Note at the end of this chapter.

A. D. 394—400. bring down the biographical sketch of Sulpicius to the close of his life. It is enough to say that his last days were embittered by remorse, and that he condemned himself to silence. Gennadius assigns his former loquacity, and his folly in having been deceived by the Pelagians, as the cause of this penance. 'Agnoscens loquacitatis culpam, silentium usque ad mortem tenuit.'* It is probable that besides his sorrow on account of Pelagianism, doubts crossed his mind as to the truth of the marvellous tales which he had propagated by his tongue and his pen, and that not having the strength of mind to acknowledge or solve his doubts, he resolved never to speak again.

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## NOTES TO CHAPTER III.

### EPIST. PAULINI AD SEVERUM SULPICIUM XI.

Frater Victor, inter alias operum tuorum et votorum narrationes, retulit nobis, desiderare te ad basilicam, quam modo apud Primuliacum nostrum majorem priore condideris, de sacris sanctorum reliquiis benedictionem, qua adornetur domestica tua ecclesia, ut fide et gratia tua dignum est. Testis est autem Dominus, quod si vel scrypulum sacri cineris habuissemus, supra quam nobis ad basilicam, quæ proxime in nomine Domini consummabitur, dedicandam necessarium erat, misissemus unanimitati tuæ: sed quia nos non habuimus hujus muneris copiam, et ille se spem ejusdem gratiæ copiosam habere dixit a sancta Silvia, quæ illi de multorum ex oriente Martyrum reliquiis spopondisset, invenimus quod digne et ad basilicæ sanctificationem vobis et ad sanctorum cinerum cumulandam benedictionem mitteremus, partem particulæ de ligno divinæ Crucis. Quod nobis donum benedicta Melania ab Ierusalem munere sancti inde episcopi Joannis attulit, hoc specialiter sorori nostræ venerabili Bassulæ misit conserva communis; sed quod alteri vestrum datur utriusque vestrum est, quia in utroque vestrum una ratione manet, et sexum evacuat fides, qua in virum perfectum ambo concurritis. Accipite ergo ab unanimis fratribus in omni bono vestrum sibi consortium cupientibus, accipite magnum in modico munus; et in segmento pæne atomo dastulæ brevis, sumite

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* De Viris Illustr. c. 19.

munimentum præsentis, et pignus æternæ salutis. Non angustetur fides vestra carnalibus oculis parva cernentibus, sed interna acie totam in hoc minimo vim Crucis videat. Cum videre vos cogitatis lignum illud, quo salus nostra, quo Dominus majestatis affixus tremente mundo pependerit, exsultetis cum tremore. Recordemur et petras fissas ad hujus aspectum Crucis; et saltem saxorum æmulatione, præcordia nostra findamus timore divino. Reputemus et velum templi eodem Crucis mysterio scissum; et intelligamus, illius veli scissuram eo fuisse prætentam, ut audientes vocem Domini, et mysterium pietatis immensæ, non obduremus corda nostra; sed a carnalibus dividamur, et scindamus infidelitatis velamen; ut revelata cordis facie, salutarium Dei munerum sacramenta videamus. Non autem vobis et hoc scribimus, ut imitemini compositionem istam, qua tubello aureolo rem tantæ benedictionis inclusimus; magis enim nos tali paratu fidem vestram imitati sumus, ut vestram vobis formulam mitteremus in specie auri. Quia scimus vos, ut aurum ignitum, intra vos habere regnum Dei, hoc est fidem Crucis, qua regnum cœlorum invaditur. Si enim, inquit, compatiamur, et conregnabimus. Et ideo non ad fidei firmamentum, quia visionem fide prævenistis; sed propter meritum fidei, quam, auditu receptam, factu probatis, misimus vobis in Domino ligni salutaris donum: ut Crucem et corpore possideretis, quam tenetis spiritu, et propositi virtute portatis.

Sed quia idipsum fides videtur postulare, non alienum puto (quia cognitu dignum est) enarrare specialem post tempora passionis historiam revelatæ et inventæ Crucis; quæ si ignoretur, facile est perspici, qua difficultate approbetur, Dominicæ Crucis esse lignum hoc; quod certum est, si in manum Judæorum venisset omnia contra fidem Christi præcaventium, conterendum et exurendum fuisse. Neque enim in Cruce abolenda negligentes fuissent, qui signaverunt sepulchrum; nec ferre potuissent, ut in Cruce superstite passio Illius coleretur, Cujus resurrectionem, vacuato discussis signaculis suis monumento probatam, coli ferre non possunt. Quid ergo nunc quæritur ubi fuerit abdita, quæ nisi latuisset, illis præsertim persecutionum temporibus Judaicam consecutis invidiam, et pæne supergressis sævitiam, manifestum est abolendam fuisse? Facile enim assequi conjectura possumus, qua vi excidissent Crucem, si extare vidissent, qui et Crucis locum persecuti sunt. Nam Hadrianus Imperator existimans se fidem Christianam loci injuria perempturum, in loco passionis simulacrum Jovis consecravit; et Bethlehem Adonidis fano profanata est; ut quasi radix et fundamentum Ecclesiæ tolleretur, si in iis locis idola colerentur, in quibus Christus natus est ut pateretur, passus est ut resurgeret, surrexit ut regnaret, judicatus ut judicaret. Me miserum! etiam ista pro nobis Dominus omnipotens perpeti non recusavit; ut ubi pro salute generis humani crucifixus pependerat, ibi hominum sacrilegio sperneretur; et super Crucem (ad quam orbe concusso, et sole refugo, et dissilientibus mortuorum excitatione monumentis, rerum natura nutaverat,) stabat simulacrum dæmonis, et ara simulacri pecudum bustis fumabat; et Dei nomen deferebatur statuis mortuorum, cum Ipse vivorum Deus, Qui et resurrectio mortuorum est, non solum mortui, sed et crucifixi hominis blasphemaretur opprobrio. In Bethlehem quoque, ubi agnoverat bos possessorem suum, et asinus præsepe domini sui, ibi principes hominum inficiati Salvatorem Deum, infames hominum amores mortesque coluerunt.

Prodita novo sidere Regis æterni incunabala ubi supplices cum suis opibus adoraverunt Chaldæi, ibi barbaras libidines sacraverunt Romani. Ubi natum Salvatorem cum exercitu Angelorum concinentes cœlesti gaudio salutaverunt illustrata nocte pastores, ibi Veneris amasium mixtæ semiviris planxere meretrices. Pro dolor! quæ pietas hominum hanc impietatem compensare poterit? Ubi sacra nati Salvatoris infantia vagierat, illic Veneris lamenta fingentium lascivis luctibus infamis ritus ululabat: et ubi Virgo pepererat, adulteri colebantur.

Mansit hoc sæculi prioris nefas in tempora nostris proxima Constantini; qui princeps esse principibus Christianis non magis sua quam matris Helenæ fide meruit: quæ, divino, ut exitus docuit, inspirata consilio, cum Ierosolymam agnosceret nomine, quæ Augusta cum filio conregnabat, eum rogavit ut sibi facultatem daret cuncta illic loca Dominicis impressa vestigiis, et divinorum erga nos operum signata monumentis purgare, destructis templis et idolis, ab omni profanæ impietatis contagio, et religioni suæ reddere; ut Ecclesia tandem in terra originis suæ celebraretur. Itaque prompto filii Imperatoris assensu mater Augusta, patefactis ad opera sancta thesauris, toto abusa fisco est: quantoque sumptu atque cultu regina poterat, et religio suadebat, ædificatis basilicis contexit omnes et excoluit locos, in quibus salutaria nobis mysteria pietatis Suæ Incarnationis, et Passionis, et Resurrectionis, atque Ascensionis sacramentis Dominus Redemptor impleverat. Mirum vero hoc quod in basilica ascensionis locus ille tantum, de quo in nube susceptus ascendit, captivam in sua carne ducens captivitatem nostram, ita sacratus divinis vestigiis dicitur, ut nunquam tegi marmore aut paviri receperit: semper excussis, solo respuente, quæ manus, adornandi studio, tentavit apponere. Itaque, in toto basilicæ spatio solus in sui cespitis specie virens permanet; et impressam divinorum pedum venerationem calcati Deo pulveris perspicua simul et attigua venerantibus arena conservat, ut vere dici possit: Adoravimus ubi steterunt pedes Ejus.

Sed in historia Crucis accipite magnum et vere divinum miraculum. Regina illa venerabilis, ut venit Ierosolymam, diligenter et pie locis illis et circa omnibus divinorum curiosa insignium, et oculis haurire gestiens fidem, quam piis auribus literisque perceperat, Crucem Domini studiosissime inquirere adorsa est. Sed quæ via vel ratio inveniendi subesset, cum index idoneus nemo inveniri posset, ubi memoriam et curam religiosæ conscientiæ vel observantiæ, et antiquitas ævi et superstitionis impiæ diuturnitas abolevisset? Verum Ipso omnium et terris et animis opertorum conscio et teste Deo, fidelis mulier Sanctum Spiritum per affectum pium meruit: Quo aspirante, cum rem ab humana conscientia divinitus remotam frustra diligens requisisset, de loco tantum passionis certior fieri studuit. Itaque non solum de Christianis doctrina et sanctitate plenos viros, sed et de Judæis peritissimos, ut propriæ (qua miseri et gloriantur) impietatis indices exquisivit, et accitos in Ierosolymam congregavit. Tum omnium una de loco testificatione confirmata jussit illico, urgente sine dubio conceptæ revelationis instinctu, in ipsum locum operam fossionis accingi; parataque mox civium pariter et militari manu brevi laborem istius molitionis hausit, et contra spem omnium, sed secundum ipsius tantum reginæ fidem, alta egestione reseratis terræ finibus, abditæ Crucis arcana patuerunt. Sed cum tres pariter cruces, ut quondam fixæ Domino et latronibus steterant, repertæ fuissent, gratulatio repertarum cœpit anxia dubitatione confundi justo piorum metu, ne forsitan aut pro cruce Domini patibulum

latronis eligerent, aut salutare lignum pro stipite latronis abjiciendo violarent. Respexit pias fideliter æstuantium curas Dominus, et ipsi potissimum, quæ tam piæ solicitudinis princeps erat, hujus consilii lumen infudit, ut aliquem recens mortuum inquiri et inferri juberet. Nec mora, verbum factum, cadaver illatum est: deponitur, jacenti una de crucibus admovetur, et altera: sed reorum ligna mors sprevit. Postremo Dominicam crucem prodit resurrectio, et ad salutaris ligni tactum morte profuga funus excussum, et corpus erectum est; tremefactisque viventibus stetit mortuus; et funebribus, ut Lazarus quondam, vinculis expeditus, illico inter spectatores suos redivivus incessit. Ergo Crux Domini tot operta ætatibus, et Judæis in tempore passionis abscondita, neque gentibus in ædificatione fani terram sine dubio ad ipsam fabricam egerentibus revelata, nonne divina manu latuit, ut nunc inveniretur cum religiose quæreretur? Ita, ut Crucem Christi decuit, experimento resurrectionis inventa et probata Crux Christi est, dignoque mox ambitu consecratur, condita in passionis loco basilica, quæ auratis corusca laquearibus, et aureis dives altaribus, arcano positam sacrario Crucem servat; quam episcopus urbis ejus quotannis, cum Pascha Domini agitur, adorandam populo princeps ipse venerantium promit. Nec præter hanc diem, qua Crucis ipsius mysterium celebratur, ipsa, quæ sacramentorum causa est, quasi quoddam sacræ solemnitatis insigne profertur, nisi interdum religiosissimi postulent, qui hac tantum causa illo peregrinati advenerint, ut sibi ejus revelatio quasi in pretium longinquæ peregrinationis deferatur. Quod solum episcopi beneficio obtineri ferunt: cujus et tantum munere de eadem Cruce hæc minuta sacri ligni ad magnam fidei et benedictionis gratiam haberi datur. Quæ quidem Crux in materia insensata vim vivam tenens, ita ex illo tempore innumeris pene quotidie hominum votis lignum suum commodat, ut detrimenta non sentiat, et quasi intacta permaneat, quotidie dividuam sumentibus, et semper totam venerantibus. Sed istam imputribilem virtutem et indetribilem soliditatem de Illius profecto carnis sanguine bibit, quæ passa mortem non vidit corruptionem.

Speramus autem et vobis non solum benedictionis monumento, sed et incorruptionis seminario futurum, ut ejus inspectio fidem vestram etiam de recordatione beati illius latronis accendat, qui bene verso latrocinio, longas in magnis laboribus sanctorum vias de momenti fide et momento confessionis anticipans, non immerito ante ipsos Apostolos et martyres præparatum ipsis ab initio, ut ait, regnum primus invasit, et pius cœli prædo diripuit; quia Christum crucifixum similitudine suæ pœnæ videns, in eo statu de quo etiam discipulorum fides turbata nutaverat, Dominum tamen majestatis, ut erat, confessus est: et petens in regno Dei memoriam sui fieri, gloriam resurrectionis ante ipsam resurrectionem credidit; quam Apostoli, postea quam facta est, non tantum videndo, sed experiendo crediderunt. Nec ipsi tamen de resurrectione carnis potius quam de resurrectionis qualitate dubitantes; quia videlicet qui in orbem terrarum mittendi forent ad omnium gentium informationem, non auribus tantum, sed et oculis prædicandam fidem capere debebant, ut quod firmius didicissent, constantius edocerent.

## PAULINUS TO SEVERUS SULPICIUS.

### LETTER XI.

Our brother Victor, in describing your other works and pious wishes, has reported to me that for the basilica which you have lately erected at our Primuliac, of larger dimensions than the former, you were desirous of procuring a blessing, derived from the sacred relics of the saints, with which to decorate your domestic church. The wish is worthy of your faith and piety; and the Lord is our witness that if we had possessed but a single grain of sacred dust, beyond what was necessary for the consecration of the church, which, in the name of the Lord, will shortly be completed, we would have sent it to such a kindred spirit. But because that gift was beyond our power to bestow, and that Victor said that he had great hopes of obtaining the same favour from the holy Silvia, who had promised him some of the relics of the numerous eastern martyrs, we have devised a suitable present both for the consecration of the church, and to increase the blessing conveyed by the sacred ashes. The offering is a minute particle of the wood of the divine Cross. This precious gift, presented to the blessed Melania by John, the holy bishop of Jerusalem, and brought by her from thence, is sent more especially to our venerable sister Bassula, by our fellow-servant in the Lord [Therasia]; but what is given to one of you is the property of both, because one mind governs both, and the faith by which you both grow together into a perfect man, abolishes the distinction of sex. Accept, therefore, from brethren who are of a kindred spirit with yourselves, and who desire your participation with them in every good thing—accept a great gift in a moderate compass, and, in the almost impalpable fragment of a little splinter, take to yourselves a defence for your present safety, and a pledge of eternal salvation. Let not your faith be straitened by the eyes of the flesh viewing a diminutive object, but let it discern in this atom, by the inward sight, the entire power of the cross. Whilst you imagine that you behold that wood on which our salvation, the Lord of Majesty, was suspended amidst the trembling of the world, do ye yourselves rejoice with trembling. Let us remember that at the sight of this Cross even the rocks were rent; and let us, by all means, rend our own hearts with divine fear, in imitation of the rocks. Let us reflect that the veil of the temple was rent asunder by the same mystery of the Cross; and let us understand that the rending of the veil was recorded for this purpose, that we should not harden our hearts when we hear the voice of the Lord, and learn the mystery of infinite piety, but separating ourselves from carnal things, tear asunder

the veil of unbelief, that the face of the heart being unveiled, we may behold the mysteries of the gifts of God which bring salvation. We do not, however, write this to you that you should imitate the outward setting, whereby we have enclosed within a little golden tube the substance of so great a blessing. Rather have we, by so encasing it, imitated your faith, that we might send you a type of yourselves represented under the figure of gold. Because we know that, like gold refined by fire, you have within you the kingdom of God, that is, the faith of the Cross, by which the kingdom of heaven is taken by violence. For if, saith he, we suffer with Him, we shall likewise reign with Him. And therefore, not for the confirmation of your faith—for by faith you have anticipated sight; but on account of the merit of your faith, received by hearing, and proved in very deed, have we sent you, in the Lord, the gift of the wood that confers salvation; that you may possess that cross in the body, which you cling to in the spirit, and bear by virtue of the hope which is set before you.

But because the narrative appears to be demanded by faith,—and it is certainly deserving of being known,—I consider it not to be inappropriate to relate the remarkable history of the revelation and discovery of the cross, since the time of our Saviour's passion. For if this history were unknown, it is easy to understand how great would be the difficulty of proving that this wood is a portion of the Lord's cross; since it is certain that had it fallen into the hands of the Jews, who employed every precaution to oppose the faith of Christ, it must have been broken piece-meal, and consumed to ashes. For those who sealed up the sepulchre would not have been remiss in annihilating the cross; nor could they have endured the adoration of his passion in the survival of the cross, when neither do they endure the adoration of his resurrection, though proved by the vacant sepulchre, and the broken seals. Why, then, is there now any question about the place of its concealment, since, had it not been hidden, especially in those times of persecution which followed upon Jewish hatred, and almost exceeded Jewish barbarity, it is manifest that it must have been utterly destroyed. For we may readily infer with what violence they who persecuted the very site of the cross, would have exterminated the cross itself, if they had seen it to be yet in existence.

For the emperor Hadrian, imagining that he should extinguish the Christian religion by outraging its localities, dedicated an image to Jupiter on the site of the passion: Bethlehem also was profaned by a fane of Adonis; that the root, as it were, and foundation of the Church should be swept away, if idols were but worshipped in the places where Christ was born, that he might suffer; where he suffered, that he might rise again; where he rose again, that he might reign;

where he was judged, that he might judge. Woe is me! even this indignity did not the Lord Omnipotent refuse to endure for our sakes, that where he had hung nailed to the cross, for man's salvation, there should He be spurned by man's profanity. And above the cross—before which the earth quaked, the sun recoiled, the graves were violently rent open by the raising of the dead, and all nature was shaken—above that cross stood the image of a demon, and the altar of the graven image smoked with the burnt carcases of beasts. While the name of God was conferred on the statues of the dead, the very God of the living, who is also the resurrection of the dead, was blasphemed with the reproach of being not only a dead man, but a crucified malefactor. In Bethlehem also, where the ox had known his owner, and the ass his master's crib, there did the princes of men, denying the God their Saviour, commemorate the infamous loves and deaths of human beings. Where the Chaldeans suppliantly adored with their treasures the cradle of the Eternal King, revealed by a new star, there did the Romans solemnize their libidinous and barbarian rites. Where shepherds, in the brightness of the night, joined in the chaunt of the angelic host, and hailed with heavenly joy the new-born Saviour, there did harlots, mingling with emasculated miscreants, bewail the minion of Venus. Unutterable sorrow! What human piety will ever be enabled to compensate this impiety? Where the hallowed infancy of the new-born Saviour had wailed, there howled the shameful rites of wretches counterfeiting with lascivious sorrows the lamentations of Venus; and where the virgin had brought forth, adulterers were worshipped.

This abomination of a former age continued nearly to our own time, to that of Constantine; who deserved to be the first of Christian princes, not more by his own faith, than by that of his mother Helena. For that august lady, reigning conjointly with her son, and inspired, as the result evinced, with heavenly wisdom, when she was acquainted with Jerusalem by fame only, requested the emperor to invest her with full authority to destroy the heathen temples and idols, and cleansing from all infection of profane impiety every place which had been imprinted with the footsteps of the Lord, and stamped with the memorials of his divine labours, to restore them to *her own religion, that the Church might at length be honoured in the land of its origin. On receiving the ready assent of her Son, and having the imperial treasures placed at her disposal for this holy work, the august mother made an unsparing use of their resources; and by the erection of churches with such costliness and splendour as a queen might display,

* To their own sanctity (?).

and religious zeal suggest, she covered and adorned every place in which the Lord our Redeemer had fulfilled his offices of love for our salvation, by the mysteries of the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension. Marvellous, indeed, is this fact, that in the Church of the Ascension, that spot alone from which he was received up into a cloud, and ascended into heaven, leading our captivity captive in his own flesh, is said to have been so hallowed by the divine footsteps, that it never admitted of being paved or covered with marble; the materials being invariably flung aside by the soil, which indignantly rejected whatever the hand attempted to lay upon it for the purposes of ornament. Therefore, in the whole space within the church that spot alone retains the verdant appearance of the native turf; and the area presents to the sight and touch of the venerating spectator, impressed upon it by the divine feet, the sanctity of dust trodden by the Deity; so that it may be said with truth, We have worshipped where his feet stood.

But in the history of the cross, hear a great and truly divine miracle. The venerable queen, on her arrival at Jerusalem, evincing a holy diligence and zeal in exploring the vestiges of the deity in the immediate neighbourhood and the adjoining country beyond, and delighted to drink in by her eyes the faith which she had before piously received by her ears and by the use of books, proceeded with the utmost eagerness to seek for the cross of the Lord. But what means or method of discovering it subsisted, when no competent informant could be found in a place where both the lapse of time, and the long prevalence of an impious superstition had obliterated all care and memory of knowledge or observance in matters of religion? But by the testimony of God himself, to whom all secrets are known, whether in the earth, or in the hearts of men, this woman, so full of faith, obtained by her piety the aid of the Holy Spirit; and by his inspiration, after she had sought with unavailing diligence to penetrate into a secret withdrawn by divine providence from human knowledge, she was now anxious to be informed of the place only of our Saviour's passion. Therefore she sought out not only such Christians as were replete with knowledge and holiness, but likewise the most learned of the Jews, as witnesses against their own impiety, (in which these miserable men even glory,) and summoned them to an assembly at Jerusalem. Then, being assured of the precise site by their unanimous testimony, and instigated doubtless by the impulse of the revelation she had received, she directed that immediate preparations should be made for digging: and having provided a body of citizens and soldiers, she speedily completed her enterprise, and contrary to the expectations of all, but in accordance with the faith of the queen

alone, when the bosom of the earth had been laid open by a deep excavation, the mystery of the hidden cross was brought to light. But since three crosses were found together, as they formerly stood fixed for our Lord and the malefactors, mutual congratulations on their discovery began to be blended with anxious doubts, suggested by the well grounded apprehensions of the faithful, lest perchance they should either select the gibbet of a thief for the cross of the Lord, or profane the wood of salvation by flinging it aside as the stake of a felon. The pious care evinced in their faithful anxiety was regarded with favour by the Lord; and into the mind of her, who was the principal author of this holy solicitude, he infused the happy thought of directing that some corpse recently dead should be sought after and brought. No sooner said than done; not a moment is lost; a dead body is brought; it is laid down: one of the crosses is applied to it as it lay, and then another: but death spurned the wood of the guilty. Finally, the cross of the Lord is revealed by the act of resurrection; and at the touch of the wood of salvation death was put to flight, the grave repelled, and the corpse raised; the dead stood erect, while the living trembled, and released, like Lazarus of old, from his grave clothes, he moved about among the spectators, once more a living man. Such was the discovery of the cross of the Lord, which was buried in the ground for so many generations, and hidden to the Jews at the time of the passion, nor yet revealed to the Gentiles, when in the erection of their temple they doubtless excavated the earth for its foundations. Was it not by the divine hand that it was concealed, that it might be found when it was sought with religious reverence? Thus, as became the cross of Christ, is it discovered, and demonstrated to be the true cross by the proof of resurrection. It is soon afterwards inclosed within a suitable building, a church being raised on the site of the passion, where glittering with a ceiling of gilded fret-work, and enriched with golden altars, it preserves the cross laid up in its most hallowed sanctuary.* Every year when the Lord's Easter is celebrated, it is produced by the bishop of the city for the adoration of the people, he being himself the leader of their worship. Nor except on this day, on which the mystery of the cross itself is celebrated, is the cross, which is the cause of the Christian mysteries, produced, being the ensign, as it were, of the sacred solemnity; unless when from time to time persons of preeminent religious faith desire it, when they have travelled thither with this sole object, that the exhibition of the cross might be vouchsafed to them, as a kind of payment in requital of their long pilgrimage. This boon they say is

* See Bingham, Viii. vi. § 2.

accorded solely by the favour of the bishop, by whose special gift also this minute fragment of the sacred wood is granted for the great increase of faith and heavenly benediction: while the cross itself, retaining a living force in inanimate matter, continues, from time to time, to afford its daily supplies of wood to the almost innumerable wishes of men, but in such a manner as not to be susceptible of diminution; for, enduring as though it were untouched, it is daily divisible to the receivers, but always entire to the worshippers. But this incorruptible virtue, and indestructible solidity, it doubtless imbibed from the blood of that flesh, which, though it suffered death, did not see corruption. To you also we hope it will not only be the memorial of a blessing, but the seed of incorruption, that the sight of it may likewise inflame your faith with the recollection of that blessed thief, who, by a happy change of robbery, with the faith of a moment, and with a moment of confession, anticipated the tardy progress of the saints in their mighty labours; and, before the apostles and martyrs themselves, was not undeservedly the first to seize upon the kingdom which had been prepared for them, as the Saviour saith, from the beginning, and boldly made spoil of it, a pious plunderer of the skies. For though he beheld Christ crucified after the similitude of his own punishment, yet in that condition, in which the faith even of the disciples wavered and was shaken, still he confessed him to be, as he truly was, the Lord of majesty. Entreating that he should be remembered in the kingdom of God, he believed in the glory of the resurrection, even before the resurrection, which, after it had come to pass, the apostles believed, not through their sight only, but by the experience of their other senses. Yet was it not so much of the fact of the resurrection of the flesh that they doubted, as of the manner of it; doubtless because it was right that the faith to be preached by those, who were to be sent abroad throughout the world to teach all nations, should be received not by the ear only, but likewise by the eye, that in proportion to the certainty with which they had learnt, might be the constancy with which they taught, the gospel.

## CHAP. IV.

### PAULINUS.

A. D. 354—380.

ANICIUS PONTIUS PAULINUS was one of those worthies of Aquitain, of whom that province had so much reason to be proud. He was born at Bordeaux about the year 354, and being descended from a wealthy and patrician family of Rome, and educated under the care of Ausonius, one of the ablest instructors of the time, he rose rapidly to some of the highest honours of the state. He is even said to have attained the Consular dignity, but this is doubtful, for his name does not appear in the *fasti*. He enjoyed so high a degree of celebrity among his contemporaries as a literary man, that Ausonius spoke of his eloquence and poetical talents in extravagant terms of praise,* and Jerome pronounced his epistolary style to be almost Ciceronian. Erasmus thought those eulogies to be not undeserved, and called

* Epistola Auson, 19. Hier. Epist. ad Paulin. 153 alias 51. 'Voce me provocas ad scribendum, torres eloquentia ; et in Epistolari stylo prope Tullium repræsentas.'

him the 'Christian Cicero,' but the more refined classical taste of the present age will not agree with their judgment. A. D. 354—380

Every earthly distinction and enjoyment but one seem to have been at the command of Paulinus. He had large estates in France, Spain, and Italy. He was married to a woman whom he tenderly loved, and who had brought a large increase to his property and influence. He was alive to all the charms of science and literature. He was loved, sought after, and respected by all the good men of his age, whether Christians or Heathens, says one of his biographers, (Du Pin); and he maintained the closest intercourse and correspondence with the most eminent men of all parties, without embroiling himself with any of them. Travellers from distant countries went out of their way to see him. 'Do not consider it any trouble or retardation of your journey, to go and visit Paulinus, that illustrious man, whose fame is spread over all the earth.' This was the advice of Sulpicius to Posthumian.* He was truly called the 'delight of his age:' but he had none to inherit his name and property. His only son had died in infancy when he was residing in Spain. This was a grief that preyed upon his heart, and to it may be attributed his resolution of abandoning the world, its pleasures, its engagements, and all its secular duties. It is difficult to say when the thoughts of Paulinus were first seriously di-

* Dial. Sulp. 3, c. 20.

A. D. 380—392.

rected to the cross of Christ, and whether his parents were Christians or not. In his second *Natalis*, which was composed in the year 394, or 395, he has recorded that he was present at a festival fifteen years before,* in honour of St. Felix at Nola, i.e. in 379 or 380, when he was twenty-seven years of age, and that he then dedicated his heart to that saint, and had continued to invoke him from that time. In another poem, he says, that he was devoted to Felix, as his patron saint, from his *earliest days;* 'primis ab annis'†—but whether this means from his infancy, or from his conversion, is doubtful. He was not baptized until he reached maturity, for in that age, with some, under conscientious, with others under superstitious feelings, it was not unusual to delay baptism long after the individual had become a proselyte to Christianity. The sacred rite was administered to Paulinus by Delphinus, bishop of Bourdeaux, according to the calculation of Du Pin, in 389, but Fleury thinks it was in 392.

Paulinus retires from the world.

His retirement from the anxieties and business of life, took place soon after his baptism, and naturally gave rise to many remonstrances, not only on the part of his gay and thoughtless friends, but also of some of the religiously and seriously dis-

* ———— Tria tempore longo
Lustra cucurrerunt, ex quo solennibus istis
Coram vota tibi, coram mea corda dicavi.
Natalis Secundus, Oper. Paul. 537.

† ———— tibi me memini debere, cui me
Mancipium primis donavit Christus ab annis.
Natalis 14, Fragmenta. Opera Paul, 631.

posed. His preceptor and friend Ausonius was among the most earnest of those, who attempted to shake his resolution ; and the correspondence which passed between them on the occasion contains so many beautiful passages, illustrative of the modes of living, conversing, and thinking among nominal and real Christians at the latter end of the fourth century, that a selection of them will not be unacceptable to the reader. In fact, there are very few things in the literature of any age, which can be read with more interest than the poetical reproaches addressed by Ausonius to Paulinus, on the interruption of their intercourse and correspondence, in consequence of the withdrawal of the latter from his former associates and pursuits. The rejoinders and explanations on the part of the Christian recluse, are also in verse, and are equally beautiful. To the expostulations and occasional sarcasms of Ausonius, Paulinus replies in a uniform tone of religious meekness and solemnity. A. D. 392—395.

Ausonius appeals to their ancient friendship, to the happy days they had formerly spent together in study, and to the attractions of the country, which Paulinus had left for scenes of seclusion in Spain. He implored him by the muse they had cultivated together, by the hopes so universally entertained of his future eminence, by the illustrious line from which he was descended, by the duties of the high station which he occupied, and by every consideration of patriotism, ambition, and friendship, to return to the duties of active life. Remonstrances of Ausonius.

395. Nothing can be more inviting than the description of the lovely and healthy region to which the poet entreats Paulinus to return. Its vine-clad hills, and happy population; its verdant meadows, and shady groves; its fertilizing streams and delicious climate; its warm and mild winters, and its summers cooled by the gentle breath of the north wind, are contrasted with the burning soil of Spain.*

In another epistle, Ausonius asks with patriotic indignation, 'Shall Bilbilis or the rock of Calagorris deprive me of my friend, who is the pride of his country, and the ornament of the senate?'† Sometimes he indulges in a severer strain, as when he imputes the estrangement of Paulinus to the influence of his wife, whom he compares very unjustly to the ambitious woman who ruled Tarquinius Priscus.‡ But for the most part, the tone of his remonstrances is serious and affectionate in the extreme, and sometimes softens down to pious

* 'Terjuga Burdigalæ trino me flumina cœtu
Secernunt turbis popularibus: otiaque inter
Vitiferi exercent colles, lætumque colonis
Uber agri, tum prata virentia, tum nemus umbris
Mobilibus, celebrique frequens ecclesia vico;
Totque mea in Novero sibi proxima prædia pago,
Dispositis totum vicibus variata per annum,
Egelidæ ut tepeant hyemes, rabidosque per æstus
Aspirent tenues frigus subtile Aquilones.
Te sine sed nullus grata vice provenit annus.'
Auson. Epist. 24, l. 90—99.

† 'Ergo meum, patriæque decus, columenque Senati
Bilbilis, aut hærens scopulis Calagorris habebit?'
Auson. Epist. 25. l. 56, 57.

‡ 'Tanaquil tua nesciat istud.'—Ibid. Epist. 23, l. 31.

importunity, affording a strange contrast with some of his loose productions. 'If the supreme Father, and the Son of God, will vouchsafe to hear the prayers of the suppliant, thou wilt be restored in answer to my humble petition, and I shall no longer have to mourn over the house, which has lost its lord, or to bewail the misfortunes of an estate subject to an hundred masters, and to regret the absence of one so dear, who is wandering over Spain forgetful of his old friends, and confiding in strangers.'* A.D. 392—395.

At the conclusion of the metrical epistle which breathes this devout strain, so different from some of his poetical effusions, which were utterly unworthy of a Christian poet, Ausonius expresses his ardent longing for the arrival of his friend, in a burst of feeling, that reminds us of the song of Deborah, and of her vivid picture of maternal impatience.—"The mother of Sisera looked out of the window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming, why tarry the wheels of his chariots?"†

* Si genitor natusque Dei pia verba volentum
Accipiat, nostro reddi te posse precatu:
Ne sparsam raptamque domum, laceratque centum
Per dominos veteris Paulini regna fleamus:
Teque vagum toto quam longa Hispania tractu,
Immemorem veterum, peregrinis fidere amicis.
Auson. Epist. 24, l. 113—118.

† The celebrated description of the march of Sennacherib, by Isaiah, also occurs to us on reading the passage in Ausonius, to which attention is now directed.

"He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron. At Michmash he hath laid up his carriages: They are gone over the passage: they

A. D. 394—395.

Thus wrote the poet in a dramatic strain, which forcibly expressed his affectionate impatience for the return of Paulinus. 'When will the messenger gladden my ears with the news of his approach! when shall I hear 'Paulinus is coming!' He has left the towns of Spain behind him. He has set his foot on the Tarbellican soil. He has reached Ebromagus.* He is on his way to his brother's abode. His bark is gliding down the stream. He is in sight. He nears the shore. There he is. He lands amidst the acclamations of the people, who are all gone out to welcome him. He passes by his own door, and now he is at your threshold. Can I believe it, or am I only dreaming of what I wish may come to pass.' †

have taken up their lodging at Geba, Ramah is afraid, Gibeah of Saul is fled."—Isaiah x. 28, 29.

* Some Geographers say that Ebromagus was on the site of the modern *Brau* or *Embrau* near the Garonne, not far from *Blaye:* but Vaissette, Vol. I. p. 634, contends that it was the place now called *Bram* or *Vibram*, near the source of the little river *Lars* in the *Pays de Laurequais*, and in the diocese of Thoulouse. This is at no great distance from the *Eluso* (Alzonne) of Sulpicius Severus.

† Et quando iste meas impellet nuntius aures?
Ecce tuus Paulinus adest: Jam ninguida linquit
Oppida Iberorum, Tarbellica jam tenet arva.
Hebromagi jam tecta subit, jam prædia fratris [1]
Vicina ingreditur; jam labitur amne secundo;
Jamque in conspectu est; jam prora obvertitur amni;
Ingressusque sui celebrata per ostia portus
Totum occursantis populi prævertitur agmen:
Et sua præteriens, jam jam tua limina pulsat.
Credimus, an qui amant, ipsi sibi somnia fingunt?
Ibid. Epis. xxiv. l. 123—132.

[1] The Delphin annotators say that nothing is known about this brother of Paulinus. Mention is made of his death in the xix. Epis. Paul ad Delphin.

A. D. 392—395

The replies of Paulinus

The replies which Paulinus made to Ausonius were equally kind and tender, but the affection of the friend had evidently yielded to a stronger affection, and earthly things were passing from his mind. He acknowledged that his former tastes and pursuits had ceased to have charms for him; that the heart dedicated to Christ could no longer devote itself to Apollo and the muses: and that he was inspired by a higher power.*

With great dignity he reminds his friend that he ought to bear with him, on his having higher views—and to congratulate him on his present happier frame of mind.†

In another poetical rejoinder, he mildly, but firmly, admits that his mind had undergone a great change, and that he was governed by the will of the supreme God.‡

And then with a beautifully-turned compliment he tells him, that it ought to gratify him to think, that Christ had been pleased to illuminate the mind, which had once been under the training of Ausonius.§

* Quid abdicatas in meam curam, pater,
Redire musas præcipis?
Negant Camœnis, nec patent Apollini
Dicata Christo pectora.
* * * * *
Nunc alia mentem vis agit—Major deus.
Epist. Paulini Ausonio 2. Opera Paul. p. 469.

† Ignosce amanti, si geram quod expedit;
Gratare, si vivam ut libet. Ibid. p. 471.

‡ Mens nova me fateor cepit, mens non mea quondam,
Sed mea nunc auctore Deo.—Epist. iv. ibid. p. 474.

§ ——— qui si quid in actu
Ingeniove meo sua dignum ad munia vidit,

A. D. 392—395.

He gently replies to his friend's severe reflection upon his wife, by assuring him that his Therasia was a Lucretia, and not a Tanaquil :—

Nec Tanaquil mihi, sed Lucretia conjux.*

He reminds him, that Spain has her local charms, and her historic glory, as well as France and Italy.†

After a series of holy meditations, which cast a soft light over the whole epistle, he concludes with this noble and devout sentiment: 'If I have convinced you, congratulate your friend on the rich prospects before him. If not, leave him to the enjoyment of Christ's approbation.'‡

He who could write thus, with all the deliberation which metrical composition required, was not likely to give way to the arguments or solicitations of a man of the world, like Ausonius. Paulinus adhered to his determination of renouncing every thing that is considered most dear to man. He sold several of his finest estates to give to the poor: he assumed the garb of poverty: he denied himself the ordinary comforts of life, and for four years did he continue to practise mortifications, until he had brought himself to that standard of self-abne-

Gratia prima tibi, tibi gloria debita cedet,
Cujus præceptis partum est quod Christus amaret.
Quare gratandum magis est tibi quam queritandum. &c. &c.
Ibid. p. 475.

* Ibid. p. 476.

† Quid numerem egregias terris et mœnibus urbes,
Qua geminum felix Hispania tendit in æquor.—Ibid. p. 477.

‡ Si placet hoc, gratare tui spe divite amici:
Si contra est, Christo tantum me linque probari.—Ibid. p. 480.

gation to which he aspired. 'What will the great men of the world say,' wrote St. Ambrose,* 'when they shall hear that a man of the rank of Paulinus, who has every advantage which nature and circumstances can give him, has quitted the senate, and distributed, in almsgiving, the property of a family so illustrious and influential.' The Christian congregation at Barcelona thought so highly of this spirit of self-denial, that they considered it a trait of holiness, sufficient to dispense with ordinary rules; and one of those irregular proceedings took place, which were not uncommon at this period of Church history.

A. D. 392—395.

In the year 393, when Paulinus was celebrating the nativity of our Lord at Barcelona, the people insisted upon his being instantly ordained to the sacerdotal office, although he had not previously been ordained deacon. All expostulation was in vain: the call must be obeyed, and Paulinus consented to become a presbyter, on condition of not being obliged to undertake any pastoral charge, or to confine his services to any particular church or diocese. This irregularity was seriously resented by many of the clergy, especially by those of Rome; and Siricius, the Bishop of Rome, not only signified his disapprobation, but afterwards treated Paulinus with some indignity, when he visited that city on his way to Nola. The forbearing spirit, in which this meek Christian spoke afterwards of the treatment which he received in

Irregular Ordination of Paulinus

* Epist. Ambr. 30.

A. D. 392—395.

the capital, is highly creditable to him, and the whole transaction shews that the episcopal authority of the Roman prelate did not then extend beyond his own metropolitan diocese. Siricius had the will, but not the power to declare the ordination of Paulinus null and void. The account which Paulinus gave of his elevation to the priesthood, and of his reflections on that important event in his life, is among the most interesting passages of his correspondence. 'We are still at Barcelona, as I have already told you; but since your last letter, on Christmas day, I was forcibly taken by a crowd of people, who insisted on my instantly being ordained priest. I resisted, but was obliged to yield to the violence of the multitude, or rather, as I believe, to the secret will of Providence. I declare that it has been against my will, not that I had any aversion from, or that I disregarded a dignity so sublime; God is my witness that I wished to enter His service, but it was only by the first steps to holy orders; "as a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord." Feeling that my destiny lay in another direction, I looked with apprehension at this new and unexpected manifestation of the Divine will. I have, however, taken upon myself the yoke of Jesus Christ, and I see that I am engaged in a service infinitely beyond my strength and merits. It appears to me, that I am now admitted into the holy place, and to the contemplation of the mysteries of God, and that I am henceforth to participate in the Spirit, the body, and the glory of Christ. I acknowledge

that my understanding is still too weak to be able to comprehend it, and I tremble under a sense of my own infirmities. But He, who "maketh wise the simple, and who, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, hath perfected praise," is able to accomplish the work which He has begun in me, and to make me worthy of the sacred office, to which He has called me. A. D. 392—395.

'You know, however, that this will not interrupt the vow, which I made under the inspiration of the same God. I have only consented to my ordination in the Church of Barcelona on condition of not being obliged to bind myself to that Church. Thus, I have entered the priesthood of the Lord without being obliged to devote myself to the service of any particular Church.

'Come, then, and see me, I pray you, and let it be before Easter. I earnestly desire this, in order that you may be able to commemorate the festival of the holy week with me in my sacerdotal character. If you think, however, that it may be more propitious to travel, after having implored the protection of God during the Easter solemnities, let it be so. But I hope, nevertheless, that our Lord will so inspire you, that you will set out immediately after Easter.

'The messenger who came to me from you, will inform you of the length of the journey, and that he was but eight days coming here, from Alzonne. It is so short and easy, that the Pyrenees, between Narbonne and Spain, which are said to be so terrible, are more so in name than in reality. But

A. D. 392—395.

why should I talk to you of the road;—if you have any anxiety to see me, it will appear short, and you will always find it too long if you have no such desire.' *

Paulinus at Nola.

In the year 394, Paulinus carried his long cherished desire into execution, and bidding a final adieu to all mundane things, established himself at Nola in Campania, with the determination of making it his abode for the rest of his life. Therasia, his chaste and devoted wife, accompanied him, but they had long ago ceased to think of each other, except as brother and sister, and in this relation they dwelt together, vying who should most faithfully enact the part of a servant of the Lord, in prayer and supplications, in hospitality and almsgiving. Night and day they had their express hours for acts of devotion, and they endeavoured to fulfil every claim of charity to the very letter of scriptural admonition. They washed the feet of pilgrims and beggars and way-faring men: every traveller, whose road lay near their habitation, was at liberty to make the hospice at Nola his resting-place and house of refreshment; they provided granaries of corn not only for the supply of the poor of the immediate neighbourhood, but of those also who were at a distance; they prepared decent clothing for the naked, and changes of raiment for such as required them. Besides all this, money was laid out to enable insolvents to pay their debts, and to redeem

* Epis. Paul. ad Sulp. 6.

captives from slavery. In fact, so boundless was their generosity, that abundant as were the means of Paulinus to meet the legitimate demands of charity, those means failed before the lavish expenditure which he imposed upon himself. He was so reduced at one time as to be unable to buy salt, and an anecdote is told of his having no money left to relieve a petitioner, until an unexpected supply came to the replenishment of his coffers. Here then, was, the man of consular dignity, who had lived amidst the choicest society of Rome, and of the provincial capitals; and his wife, who had been nursed and educated in all the luxuries of that luxurious age, excluding themselves from the enjoyments to which they had been accustomed, and ministering to the wants of the indigent and squalid, with their own hands; and denying themselves that they might clothe the naked, and feed the hungry, and visit those who were sick and in prison. A. D. 392—395.

It was a sight on which angels might have looked and rejoiced: but not without a mixture of regret, for in truth, Paulinus ascribed too much meritoriousness to the act of almsgiving; and he considered that he was purchasing salvation by laying out his money in charity. Tillemont has honestly admitted this in his beautiful panegyric on the saint of Nola. 'Paulinus speaks of his liberality, as if it were something necessary to his salvation.'*

* 'Il en parle comme d'une action qui luy avoit esté necessaire pour le sauver.'—Tillemont, Memoires Eccles. 14, 23.

A. D. 392—395.

There is another reason why the retreat of Paulinus at Nola cannot be contemplated without feelings of sorrow. What induced him to prefer that place before all the pleasant spots in France, Spain, and Italy, where he might have set up his tabernacle? Nola certainly had its attractions: as a town of antiquity, its name had been known for a thousand years. It was situated within sight of Vesuvius, at the distance of fifteen miles from Naples, and twenty-four from Capua: but it had not the advantage of being placed on the banks of a great river, or close to the sea, or of being so situated as to command peculiar facilities for spreading the knowledge of the gospel. It was not more secluded, if seclusion was his object, than some of his many other estates. But it was the burial place of Felix, his patron saint, his *Dominædius*,* or 'Lord of the Edifice,' as he called him. What was the exact origin of the superstitious veneration, which he entertained for that martyr, does not appear from his writings: farthermore than that he was present at a festival in commemoration of Felix, when he was about twenty-seven years of age, and a deep impression

* Epist. ad Sulp. et Nat. 7, p. 578. '*Dominædius*.' 'This term,' say the French translators, signifies, '*le maitre du logis*,' to give us to understand that the Church of Nola was addressed to St. Felix, according to the custom of the ancient Christians, which manifestly reproves the impiety of the heretics, who do dishonour to God, in refusing to give honour to the saints. Paulinus called St. Felix his patron, to teach us that the saints are truly our protectors near the throne of God, and that we obtain succour through their intercession: and this again condemns the heretics, who deny that the saints ought to be invoked.'—Lettres de Paulin. p. 78, 79. Edit. Par. 1703.

was made upon his mind in regard to the miraculous sanctity of the tomb, wherein the martyr's remains were deposited. That which he then saw or heard was never effaced from his mind, and the two Jesuits, who edited one of the best editions of his works, attribute his conversion to the miracles which he witnessed on that occasion.* From thenceforth he cherished the hope, that the sacred precincts of the saint's grave would be his future residence, and in all the after events of his life, whatever evil or danger he escaped, whatever good he performed, and whatever temptation he resisted, was attributed to the intercession and aid of St. Felix. Every year, from the time at which he found himself able to realize his wishes, and to fix his habitation at Nola, he composed a poem or hymn, which he called Natalis, on the Martyrdom, or Spiritual Birth-day of Felix (the 14th of January, the day of the martyr's death, being considered the day of his birth unto eternal life) and in these commemorative verses, he invoked the saint's help; he prayed him for assistance, he praised him for succour received, and he enumerated the miracles, which were performed at his sepulchre. A. D. 392—395.

The saint-worship of Paulinus.

It is impossible by any sophistry, or by any form of words, or artifice of interpretation, to rescue the memory of Paulinus from the charge of 'saint-worship,' nay, it is one of his great virtues, in the estimation of the Roman church, that he was a 'saint-worshipper.' His name

* Opera Paulini, Editio Frontonis Ducæi, et Heribasti Rosweydi e Societate Jesu.—P. 661, 662. Antw. 1622.

A. D. 392—395.

is cited by her writers, as one of the earliest and best authorities for the practice. I refer confidently to Baronius* on this subject: and I will transcribe a passage from the preface to the '*Natales*,' by the editors of the Antwerp edition of the works of Paulinus, to put it beyond all contradiction, that the Romish advocates of saint and image worship have always triumphantly pointed to the example of the holy man of Nola, as the most complete they could offer, in reference both to the antiquity of the practice and the weight of authority† for it. Speaking of the '*Natales*,' edited by Dungalus in the ninth century, they say, 'Dungalus flourished eight hundred years ago, in the time of Louis the pious, and his son Lotharius, to whom he inscribed the book, in which he defended the worship of sacred images, and of the holy cross, and holy relics, on the authorities of the Fathers, against the opinions of Claudius Bishop of Turin. On mentioning our Paulinus, he nobly and truly exalts his character, and calls him a bright shining *Pharos*, and an impregnable tower,‡ who argued most clearly and eloquently

* Baron. Ann. Eccl. Sub. An. 394, 87—93.

† In page 846 of the Antwerp Edition of the works of Paulinus, Rosweyd has a long note in vindication of the practices which Protestants call superstitious and idolatrous, and justifies them by the writings and conduct of Augustine, Chrysostom, and Ambrose. Augustine, however, had his doubts on the subject. See 'De cura gerenda pro mortuis.' (especially chapters 16, 17, 18.) addressed to Paulinus.

‡ 'Beatum, inquit, Paulinum sanctitate et sapientia præditum, quasi quandam Pharum lucidissimam et turrim inexpugnabilem imprimis prætendimus.'—Opera Paulini, p. 535. Edit. 1622.

A. D. 392—395.

ı the consistent, and faithful, and religious wor- ıip of the cross and holy relics.'

In the very first Natalis, Paulinus addressed imself to his patron saint in terms of adoration, /hich are utterly indefensible, if the word of God e truly delivered in Holy Scripture.* This oem was written before Paulinus had arrived at Nola, but afterwards when he was settled there, nd when from the perpetual invocation of St. Felix, and under the effect produced by the ob- ects around him, his head was full of the imagi- nary glories of that saint, his language and his ctions exhibited more and more strongly that fatally idolatrous tendency, which Christian wor- ship was displaying at this crisis of Church history.

The Natales of Paulinus.

Let the reader examine the *Natales* of Paulinus in their chronological order, and he will perceive distinctly, how the writer sunk lower and lower, year after year, until he was immersed in the most grovelling superstition.

In the second Natalis, written in 394; † he ascribes his safety to Felix, and implores him to continue to be propitious.‡

* 'Vectus in æthereum sine sanguine Martyr honorem,
O pater, O domine, indignis licet annue servis,
* * * * *
Seu placeat telluris iter, comes aggere tuto
Esto tuis; seu magna tui fiducia longo
Suadeat ire mari, da currere mollibus undis,
Et famulis famulos a puppi suggere ventos,
Ut Campana simul Christo duce litora vecti,
Ad tua mox alacri rapiamur culmina cursu,
Inque tuo placidus nobis sit limine portus.'—Nat. I. ibid. p. 536.

† According to Pagi in 395.

‡ 'Et maria intravi duce te, quia cura pericli

A. D. 392—395.

In his third hymn to St. Felix, his fervour increases, and he ascribes to the saint the privilege of casting out devils, and of exercising an effective power over the prince of darkness, and concludes with praying, that the merits of the saint may be received in lieu of the demerits of his votaries.*

In the fourth birth-day offering, he attributes his own birth in Christ to the intercession of the departed saint.†

In the fifth poem, which abounds in the marvellous, he undertakes to enumerate the meritorious actions by which Felix had won the crown of immortality.‡

The sixth contains an account of miracles, performed for the benefit of suppliants at the tomb

Cessit amore tui, nec te sine ; nam tua sensi
Præsidia, in Domino superans maris aspera Christo :
Semper eo et terris te propter tutus et undis.
* * * * *
Sis bonus o felixque tuis, Dominumque potentem
Exores.' Nat. II. ibid. p. 537.

* 'Martyris ostendit meritum, cum jure potenti
Dæmonas exercet, divinctaque corpora solvit.
Nam sibi Felicem cæcis incumbere pœnis,
Pestiferi proceres tristi clamore fatentur,
* * * * *
Exora, ut precibus plenis meritisque redonet
Debita nostra tuis.' Nat. III. p. 538—541.

† 'Ista dies ergo et nobis sollennis habenda,
Quæ tibi natalis ; quia te mala nostra abolente
Occidimus mundo, nascamur ut in bona Christo.'
Nat. IV. ibid. p. 542.

‡ '——Dicam igitur merita, et causas meritorum,
E quibus obtinuit cælestum præmia laudum,
Æternosque dies, et magni nomen honoris.'
Nat. V. ibid. p. 553.

of Felix, and gives a sample of the prayers which were addressed to him.* A. D. 392—395.

In the seventh we have a sample also of the feeble and unsatisfactory acknowledgment, which ultimately refers every blessing to Christ, whilst it mediately ascribes the divine favour to the intervention of beatified spirits.† In this hymn we have supplicatory expressions addressed to St. Felix, which fully illustrate the character of the saint-worship of the fourth and fifth centuries. 'Hear me; help me; hasten to my assistance, effect my cure. Holy Felix, come to my aid.'‡

The eighth Natalis describes some of the signs and wonders worked by the hands of holy men of

* 'Felix sancte meos semper miserate labores,
Nunc oblite mei, cur me, rogo, vel cui nudum
Deseris? amisi charos tua dona juvencos.'
Nat. VI. ibid. p. 569.

† '——Diversus quia semper gratia dives
Materias miris Domini vertutibus addit,
Quas Deus in charo Christus Felice frequentat,
Clara salutiferis edens miracula signis.
* * * * *
Ergo minuta mei simul, et nova facta Patroni
Auscultate, precor, Dominus quæ Christus in illo
Multimoda virtute gerit, quibus omnibus unam
Confirmare fidem nobis studet.'
Nat. VII. p. 576—578.

‡ 'Sancte, precor, succurre tuo, scio proximus adstas,
Et de contigua missis hunc auribus æde
Audisti, Felix, fletum infelicis alumni;
* * * * *
Ergo veni, Felix, animæque perenne Patronus,
Nunc pro corporeo medicus mihi curre periclo.
Curre, precor, sanctasque manus oppone minanti
Lapsum oculo, et fixum quod conspicis erue ferrum.'
Ibid. p. 581.

A. D. 392—395.

God in times of old, and by a very illogical mode of reasoning, declares, that Felix deceased had done, and could do, quite as much as the prophets and apostles did, while they were living. The saint is therefore intreated to ward off the evils of war, as he had before delivered his votary from fire and flood.*

The ninth birth-day hymn is a valuable record, inasmuch as it contains a complete representation of the solemnities, and acts of adoration performed in honour of departed saints in the age of Paulinus and Vigilantius. The reader might suppose it to be a description of the very scenes, which he himself may have witnessed at Rome or Naples, on a patron saint's day in the nineteenth century: the same pageantry, the same prostrations and genuflexions, the same invocations, 'Sancte Januarie, ora pro nobis.'

The hymn commences with an expression of impatience for the arrival of the happy day, and the poet, in a very beautiful strain, enumerates the stimulants to piety, which have been found in the observance of sacred anniversaries, and other holy festivals. He then launches out into a rapturous

* 'Sicut in Assyria Daniel Babylone leones
Effusa domuit victor prece; sic tibi, Felix,
Effera barbaries Christo frangente dometur;
* * * * *
Nam Patriarcharum Felix et filius æque
Stirpis Apostolicæ es, tanti non degener hæres
Seminis, ut sanctæ legis simul atque fidei
Confessor, patriis virtutibus æmula Sanctus
Signa geris.'

Nat. VIII. p. 592, 593.

acknowledgment of the pleasure he had always experienced in the commemoration of his own patron saint's birth-day, and he hails the present festival with especial joy, because Nicetas, a Bishop from Dacia, was present to assist at, and grace it. After many exulting verses, Paulinus points to the fane which he had lately raised; he boasts of its increased dimensions, and splendour, and conveniences; of its spacious entrance, and wide folding doors. He glories in the marble and ivory, in the paintings, and sculpture, and graceful columns which adorn it. The range of cells, and the porticos are next presented to notice, with the altars and shrines, enriched with the ashes of apostles and martyrs. Here is a relic of St. Andrew, there of St. John the Baptist, of St. Thomas, and of St. Luke. There lie morsels of the bones of confessors, so numerous, that it requires several verses to name them all. The reasoning of Paulinus on the value of such relics, is so curious, that I must not omit to direct attention to it.* A. D. 392—395.

After a long argument on the right use of relics, the poet speaks of the painted walls of the Church,

* 'Quamvis Sancti omnes toto simul orbe per unum
Sint ubicumque Deum: quo præsentantur ubique,
Corporis ut sua membra Deo: sed debita sanctis
Sunt loca corporibus: neque tantum qua jacet ora
Totum corpus, ibi positorum gratia vivit:
Sed quacumque pii est pars corporis, et manus extat,
Contestante Deo meriti documenta beati.
Magna et in exiguo Sanctorum pulvere virtus
Clamat Apostolici vim corporis indice Verbo.'
Nat. IX. ibid. p. 611.

A. D. 392—395. on which were delineated many scenes from sacred history. But as if he had his misgivings on the propriety of these paintings, he proceeds to explain, that the rude ignorance of the multitudes, who flocked to the festival, required helps to devotion in those visible explanations of holy writ, which are addressed to the eye. This is followed by a lamentation over the coarse piety of some of the votaries of St. Felix, and a confession that they were too apt to convert the holy feast into a day of riot and debauchery; therefore it was necessary to furnish the Church with pictures, that the revellers might be tempted away from their eating and drinking, and learn sobriety and temperance from the representations of virtue, which were exhibited before their eyes.*

The tenth Natalis gives a further description of the ornaments of the Church dedicated to St. Felix, and relates an extraordinary miracle performed by Paulinus himself with a piece of the true Cross.† The fragment of the 14th imputes every

* 'Verum utinam sanis agerent hæc gaudia votis,
Nec sua liminibus miscerent pocula sanctis.'
* * * * *
Propterea visum nobis opus utile, totis
Felicis domibus pictura illudere sancta;
* * * * *
Dum fallit pictura famem: sanctasque legenti
Historias, castorum operum subrepit honestas
Exemplis inducta piis; potatur hianti
Sobrietas, nimii subeunt oblivia vini.'
Ibid. p. 614, 615.

† 'Ipse domum remeans, modicum, sed grande soluti,
De Crucis æternæ sumptum mihi fragmine lignum
Promo, tenensque manu adversis procul ingero flammis.'
Nat. X. ibid 620.

lessing in life, which the poet had enjoyed, to St. Felix.* A. D. 392—395.

The few lines which have been preserved of the XVth Natalis† do the same, so that in these hymns we have a mirror reflecting a true image of the mind of Paulinus, and of many of his most illustrious contemporaries, on the subject of that fatal error, which now divides the Christian world, and to which none of the ancient fathers contributed in a larger degree than Paulinus of Nola. 'Oh, Felix,' said he, in one of his prayers to that saint, 'let me die before thy tomb, and let me be presented by thee at the throne of the divine Majesty. Let me obtain a place, by means of thy intercession and of thy merits, among the saints of Christ.'—*(Natalis III.)*

It is an extraordinary fact, in the progress of the delusion under which Paulinus acted, when he invoked St. Felix, and performed so many idolatrous services in that martyr's honour, that, at one time, his mind seemed to be entertaining doubts on the subject. He wrote to Augustine to consult him concerning the spirits of the departed, and received a reply, which ought to have set him right. Augustine's answer is contained in his treatise, 'De Cura gerenda pro mortuis,' addressed to Paulinus. In this treatise, which is not a very long one, Augustine states, that it was the prac-

Paulinus consults Augustine.

* 'Omnia, præsentis vitæ rem, spemque futuræ
Quæ pariunt, tibi me memini debere.'
Nat. XIV. ibid p. 631.

† Nat. XV. ibid p. 632.

A. D. 392—395.

tice of the universal Church, in those days, to pray *for* the dead; he also declares that there were some well-authenticated relations of visions, in which apparitions of the dead appeared to make communications to the living. 'But,' said he, 'this does not prove, that the dead are aware of what is taking place upon such occasions, for the living often appear to the living in their dreams, without any consciousness of their so appearing.'*

He proceeds to tell Paulinus, that he himself once seemed to appear to a pupil of his in a dream, and to explain a difficult passage in Cicero, but that he had no consciousness of it himself (c. xi). The conclusion which he draws is this, that an apparition of a departed friend, whether seen by a person awake or asleep, is no proof that the dead can take an interest in the affairs of the living. 'If,' continues he, 'the souls of the dead could take part in the affairs of the living, and appear to them in their dreams, my mother would never be away from me a single night, for when she was alive, she followed me by land and by sea."†

In support of his opinion, that the deceased, who care for us during life, have no longer any satisfaction or disquietude on our accounts, when

* 'Sed respondendum est, non ideo putandum esse mortuos ista sentire, quia hæc dicere, vel indicere vel patere videntur in somnis. Nam et viventes viventibus dormientibus sæpe apparent, dum se ipsi nesciant apparere.'—De Cura gerenda pro mortuis, C. x.

† 'Si rebus viventium interessent animæ mortuorum, et ipsæ nos quando eas videmus alloquerentur in somnis, ut de aliis taceam, me ipsum pia mater nulla nocte desereret, quæ terra marique secuta est, ut mecum viveret.'—C. xii.

ıey pass into the world of spirits, and that they ave nothing to do with the events of this life, ʼhen once removed from it, he quotes Psalm xxvi. 0; Isaiah lxiii. 16; and 4 Kings xxii. 18—21.* A. D. 392—395.

Augustine next enter into a curious disquisition ɔn the parable of Dives and Lazarus. 'If the lead have no concern about the living, why did Dives ask Abraham to send Lazarus to his brethren? But because he made that request, does it follow, that he knew at that very moment what was the condition of his brothers?—Besides, Abraham did not send Lazarus, but replied, that they had Moses and the prophets.' (c. xiv). He affirms, that the dead know nothing of what is going on in this world, at the time when particular events take place, but they hear of things afterwards from the souls who go to the abodes of the departed.†

He asserts at the same time, that there have been instances of men receiving succour from the martyrs, but acknowledges that it is beyond his understanding to comprehend by what means, and that he dare not attempt to explain it.‡

* 'Quomodo intersunt miseriæ vivorum, cum vel sua ipsi mala patiantur, si talia merita contraxerunt, vel in pace requiescant, sicut huic Josuæ promissum est, ubi mala ulla nec patiendo, nec compatiendo, sustineant, liberati ab omnibus malis, quæ patiendo, et compatiendo cum hic viverent sustenebant.'—C. xiii.

† 'Proinde fatendum est nescire quidem mortuos quid hic agatur, dum hic agitur; postea vero audire ab eis, qui hinc ad eos moriendo pergunt.'—C. xv.

‡ 'Res hæc est altior quam ut a me possit attingi, et abstrusior quam ut a me valeat perscrutari, et ideo quid horum duorum sit, an vero

A. D. 392—395.

In all this, the reader will discover much inconsistency and vacillation, but he will not wonder that Augustine had nothing to advance in justification of the practices, which Paulinus carried out to a greater pitch of extravagance, than any of his contemporaries.

fortassis utrumque sit, ut aliquando ista fiant per ipsam præsentiam martyrum, aliquando per Angelos suscipientes personam martyrum, definire non audeo; mallem a scientibus ista perquirere.'—C. xvi.

## CHAP. V.

### JEROME, THE RECLUSE OF BETHLEHEM.

JEROME, the celebrated translator of the Bible, born in the year 340 or 342, was a native of the Dalmatian and Pannonian borders. His parents were Christian, but he himself was not baptized, until he was far advanced towards maturity. He was at least an adult,* when the sacred rite was administered. As I have before observed, it was no uncommon thing in those days to defer the baptism of the children of Christian parents; sometimes from a serious regard to the importance of engagements, which were thought to require the full consideration of a consenting mind; sometimes from a fond wish, that a sacrament, cleansing from all former sins, should be deferred as long as possible; in order that the Neophyte might have the benefit of its efficacy, at a period in life, when the indulgence of youthful passions

A. D. 340—374.

* Baronius, A. D. 372, § 39.

A. D. 340—374.

has brought a stain upon the soul, which needs such purification.*

Jerome's early career.

Jerome began life under all the advantages of rank and fortune. With ample funds at his command, he was enabled to launch into the world in pursuit of amusement or of improvement, as his own wayward will inclined him, and before he was twenty-five years of age, we find him travelling in Gaul in quest of information: studying hard at Rome, and mixing with men of science and erudition: purchasing books, collecting a library, and at the same time rushing into the most luxurious and pernicious pleasures that war against the soul.† In fact, by his own confession, he ran a career of self-indulgence, mingled with self-discipline and preparation for better things, which laid the foundation for as much future remorse as satisfaction.

His studies whetted his passion for controversy. 'Often,' said he, 'when I was a young man at Rome, it was my habit to compose and recite speeches, as if I were debating, and thus I prepared myself for real conflict, by these imaginary disputations. I used also to go into the courts of law, where I heard the most eloquent pleaders discuss subjects with so much acerbity, that they would frequently turn from the real business be-

* See another reason given by Tertullian, which shews the great antiquity of sponsors.—Tert. de Bapt. juxta finem, p. 710, 711.

† Epistle 43, p. 217 a. Epist. 1, p. 3 a. Epist. 50, c. 8, p. 110 a. cited by Tillemont, p. 8. Memoirs, vol. xii. When I follow Tillemont, I do not think it necessary to give the original passages, because I have his authority for the statement; the authority of one, who would not do injustice to Jerome.

fore them, and indulge in invectives against each other.* A. D. 340—374.

His character.

One of his expressions, '*hat he required to be purified as by fire,*'† is strongly indicative of the violence of his passions, and of the impetuosity with which he indulged them: and the probability is, that the mortifications and austerities, to which he afterwards condemned himself, had the effect of rendering his mind more sour, and his temper more ungovernable, while they were the means of keeping under his body.

It is singular proof of the difficulty which one of Jerome's warmest admirers must have found in reconciling his unchristian temper with his Christian professions, that Tillemont begins his memoir of this saint with an apology for the many acerbities and inconsistencies which he betrayed. Conscious that the saint's life presents a series of deformities, he sets out with an awkward defence of what he felt to be indefensible.

Tillemont admits, that Jerome's character as a man and an author, was full of faults; that he was fiery and impulsive, and wrote and spoke more like an orator, than an historian or a critic; that he was inaccurate in his statements, and repre-

* 'Aliquoties quum adolescentulus Romæ controversias declamarem, et ad vera certamina fictis me litibus exercerer, currebam ad tribunalia judicum, et disertissimos oratorum tanta inter se videbam acerbitate contendere, ut omissis sæpe negotiis in proprias contumelias verterentur, et joculari se invicem dente morderent. Opera Hier. 4, 243.

† Epist. 142, line 3, p. 119, as cited by Tillemont Mem. Vol. xii. p. 8.

A. D. 340–374.

sented things, rather according to the colouring given to them by his own mind, than according to truth: * that he yielded too often to his hot and violent temperament: that he let many things escape him in his writings, which cannot be justified: that he listened too eagerly to calumny even against such men as Chrysostom: that he treated his adversaries as though they were the vilest of men: that he was jealous and envious, and spared neither friend nor foe: that he was not only sour, and harsh, and choleric, but unforgiving towards those against whom he took offence.† '*But he was a man of genius*,'‡ says the French critic, as if every allowance must be made for men of genius.

His self-inflictions.

When he was about thirty years old; *i.e.* between the years 372 and 374, this ardent and impetuous man thought he could not better subdue the strength of his passions, or glorify his God, than by burying himself in the deserts of Syria,§ and practising such rigid austerities and such appalling self-inflictions, as none but a creature of

* 'C'est peu de chose de dire qu' ayant un genie grand, élevé et plein de feu plutot d'un orateur, que d'un historien, ou d'un critique, il a été souvent assez peu exact à raporter les choses comme elles etoient, et qu'il a suivi plutot les idées qu'il en avoit conceues, que la simple verité.'—Tillemont, Memoires, xii. 2.

† Ibid.

‡ 'Mais ce sont des defauts dont les beaux, et les grands esprits se defendent plus difficilement que les médiocres.'—Ibid.

§ His reasons for not returning to his own country, and for not remaining in Italy, illustrate the state of Christianity at that period. It was on account of the licentious manners of Lupicinus, bishop of Dalmatia, and of the tumults and schisms at Rome. See Du Pin. Bib. des Aut. Eccl. Note 333.

the sternest nature could encounter. 'It was out of my fear of hell, and in expiation of my sins that I did this,' said he. In another place he confesses, 'I was so tormented by the violence of my natural passions, which were too strong for me, that I did everything in my power to extinguish these flames by severe abstinence: but this did not prevent my being perpetually harassed by bad thoughts.' * A. D. 374—377.

The Recluse, who for purposes of penance or spiritual discipline, can submit not only to the deprivations, but to the bodily sufferings to which Jerome condemned himself for four years, is no subject for a sneer. He must have been influenced by the strongest motives of piety, however misguided, and he must have been supported by resolution of the highest order.

Although the two cases admit of comparison, and it is difficult to condemn the one without condemning the other, yet there is this difference between the heathen devotee, who cuts himself with lancets before wondering spectators and endures horrible tortures without a complaint,—and the Christian ascetic.—The one has an immediate, the other a remote reward in view. The one does it to be seen of men, and is sustained by the plaudits and veneration which he secures: the other has oftentimes no earthly witness of his fastings, and

* 'Dum essem juvenis, et solitudinis me deserta vallarent, incentiva vitiorum ardoremque naturæ ferre non poteram, quem quum crebris jejuniis frangerem, mens tamen cogitationibus æstuabat.' Epist. 4, al 95. Op. Hier. 4, p. 774.

A. D. 374—377. cold and nakedness. No eye sees his painful prostrations in prayer; no ear listens to his long protracted invocations, and confessions; no sympathising spectator is at hand to behold his tears, to weep with him, or to console him. But for this very reason the fanatical mortifications of the Recluse are worse than useless; they are not instructive and edifying to others; and in most cases they fail to make the individual a meeker, or more useful servant of the Heavenly Master whom he professes to honour. They are inflictions which his God and Saviour has neither commanded nor sanctioned, and being contrary to the word and will of God, are of a nature to puff up, and to engender the pride of heart which God hates. The whole of Jerome's after-life was an argument against the sufferings, to which, as a hermit, he had exposed himself. He came out of his solitude elated, acrimonious, and ungovernable in temper. He might have qualified himself for his great work, the translation of the Scriptures into latin, without such preparation: and a more extensive intercourse with mankind would have taught him to think less of himself, and more favourably of persons who differed from him in opinion.

Jerome's description of his own condition, while he remained in the frightful solitude of Chalcidia, will be read with mingled feelings of horror and pity. 'I spent my time there alone, because my soul was filled with bitterness. The sackcloth, in which I was clad, rendered my appearance rough and hideous; my skin became squalid and

black, like the hide of an Ethiopian. I spent much of my days in sighing and shedding tears, and when in spite of myself I was obliged to yield to sleep,—my body fell to the ground, so lean and devoid of flesh, that my bones could scarcely hold together. I do not speak of eating and drinking; even the sick recluse drinks nothing but cold water, and it would be a luxury, to eat anything cooked.' * A. D. 374—377.

In the same passage he declared that he passed whole weeks in fasting ('*inedia*') and sought for the gloomiest and wildest spots of the wilderness in which he might imprison his miserable body.† But when all this was unavailing, with more rationality and with better success, he had recourse to study, and began to learn the Hebrew language. The most extraordinary lesson to be learnt from this part of Jerome's history, his seclusion in Chalcidia, is, that mortifications such as these, and self-inflictions, have little to do with softening the heart, and quelling the insurrection of evil passions, or with bringing the mind into subjection and obedience. Jerome was obliged to leave the scene of

* 'Sedebam solus quia amaritudine repletus eram. Horrebant sacco membra deformia, et squalida cutis situm Æthiopicæ carnis obduxerat. Quotidie lacrymæ, quotidie gemitus, et si quando repugnantem somnus imminens oppressisset, nuda humo ossa vix hærentia collidebam. De cibis vero et potu taceo quum etiam languentes aqua frigida utantur, et coctum aliquid accepisse luxuria sit.'—Hieron. Epist. 18, alias 22. Vol. iv. pars 2. p. 30, cited by Tillemont xii. p. 20.

† 'Et repugnantem carnem hebdomadarum inedià subjugabam.'—Ibid. also cited by Tillemont, xii. 21, 22.

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his eremitical probation, in consequence of the bad conduct of other recluses in the neighbourhood of his retirement. Jealous of his reputation, as being able to practise more rigid austerities than themselves, and differing from him on points of doctrine, they assailed him with the grossest calumnies. He complained that those hermits presumed to condemn the whole world from their cells, and to set themselves up as the judges and censors* of bishops. 'It was better,' he protested, 'to live with the beasts, than with such Christians as they.'

When Jerome quitted the desert, where he had tried to fly from himself ('*pro facinoribus meis*,' is his expression,) he went to Antioch (A. D. 375 or 377,) and there he was disgusted with another faction. So little of godly union and concord prevailed in the church at this period, that it is hard to say where Christians could have been found, who were united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity. Jerome, in a letter written to Pope Damasus,† at this juncture, professed to think that pure religion was then to be found only at Rome: and, that the gospel had been corrupted everywhere else. ‡

Ecclesiastical dissensions.

* Tillemont, xii, p. 46, citing Epist. 77. † Ibid. p. 49.

‡ According to Jerome, it was to Damasus that Prætextatus said, in allusion to the pomp and wealth of the Roman pontiff, 'Make me bishop of Rome, and I will be a Christian immediately.' 'Facite me Romanæ urbis Episcopum, et ero protinus Christianus.'—Epist. Hieron. ad Pammach. Oper. 4, Pars 2, p. 310.

§ 'Profligato a sobole mala patrimonio, apud vos solos incorrupta Patrum hæreditas.'—Epist. xiv. al. 57. Ad Damasum. Oper. Hier. Vol. iv. Pars 2, p. 19.

The boasted tranquillity of the Western churches was however disturbed by perpetual jars, and the sun which was rising in the West (Nunc in occidente sol justitiæ oritur) was clouded there as much as in the east. When Damasus was elected Pope, A. D. 366, the dissensions in Rome were so violent, that the gates of the Basilica, where his rival was consecrated, were broken open, the roof was torn off, the building was set on fire, and one hundred and thirty-seven persons were killed. Such is the statement of Ammianus Marcellinus the historian, (Lib. 27. c. 3.) who blamed both parties, as Fleury remarks, without attempting to contradict the fact. The same historian, instead of making Rome the abode of sanctity, as Jerome was inclined to do, observes, that it would have been better, had the prelates there lived like the bishops in the provinces, who made themselves acceptable to God, and to his worshippers, by their meekness and modesty. So conflicting is the contemporary ecclesiastical history of the 4th century. A. D. 377—387.

At Antioch, whither Jerome repaired at this period of his history, there were three parties ranged under three individuals, each of whom arrogated to himself the title of Bishop of that Diocese. Meletius, the occupant of the see, from the year 361, Paulinus, who had been opposed to him since 372, and Vitalis, who was placed in the episcopal chair by a party of seceders, in 375 or 376.

In this schism Jerome scarcely knew what part to take, but he leant towards the faction of Pauli-

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nus, while he declared, as he had done before in the desert, that he must consider himself as subject to the Church of Rome, only for the sake of the majesty of that see, and because he had been baptized in her communion.* 'Whoever shall partake of the Lamb,' said he, 'out of that house, is profane.' † Yet, with unaccountable inconsistency, Jerome consented to be ordained priest by Paulinus, at Antioch, about the year 378, and this very fact marks, in an especial degree, the irregularities and the disunion which prevailed in an age, that has been held up to our own as the mirror of Christian purity.‡

What can be said of apostolical succession in St. Jerome's case, when he received ordination in a church torn by faction, and at the hands of a man, who had been schismatically thrust into the chair of a Bishop, undeposed by lawful authority? At a time too, when there were three nominal Bishops of Antioch, and shortly after he himself had, in the strongest language, disowned them all, saying, *that he knew nothing of Vitalis: that he rejected Meletius, and did not recognize Pauli-*

* See Jerom. Ep. viv. and xvi. aliter 57, 58.

† 'Quicunque extra hunc domum agnum comederet, profanus est. Si quis in Arca Noe non fuerit, peribit, regnante Diluvio.'—Epist. ad Dam. 14, aliter 57.

‡ Tillemont attempts to apologize for Jerome's ordination by Paulinus, (Mem. 12, 51.) The reader who studies the ecclesiastical history of these times, in the works of contemporary authors, will seek in vain for any proof of that unity of faith and discipline, which later writers have attributed to the example and influence of *Maternal* and Imperial Rome.

*nus : ' Non novi Vitalem, Meletium respuo, ignoro Paulinum.**

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Canonical order disregarded.

Canonical order was also overlooked, and violated in a scandalous manner, by Jerome's refusing to undertake the sacerdotal duties of any particular church : and by receiving ordination on the express condition, that he should be at liberty to decline the functions of the sacred office. Priest without a lawful commission, and without a pastoral charge, was Jerome ; and he makes the fourth instance, mentioned in these biographical sketches, of those disorderly ecclesiastical proceedings which are a reproach to the fourth century.

Martin and Ambrose were raised to the episcopate, and Paulinus and Jerome to the priesthood, without due attention to those rules of succession and order, which are now proclaimed by some to be essential to the elements of a Christian Church ; and these irregularities were permitted, when there was no plea of necessity to justify them. Jerome's apology for the latitude which he allowed to himself upon a subject of such importance is unsound and puerile :—' I am not to be expected,' said he to Paulinus, ' to surrender my privilege of retiring into solitude as a monk, because you have made me a priest. When I shall no longer be with you at Antioch, you will not have fewer priests than you had before my ordination.' † But notwithstanding these inconsistencies, it would have been well for Jerome, if he had passed the

* Hier. Epist. xiv. aliter 57, ad Damasum.

† Tillemont, xii, 51, citing Hier. Epist. 61.

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whole of his life, as profitably as he did during the two or three years after his questionable ordination at Antioch. He went to Constantinople in 379, and became an associate of Gregory of Nazianzum, then bishop of that city, one of the most amiable, learned, and enlightened prelates of this epoch, under whose guidance he resumed his study of Scripture, and devoted himself with great earnestness to literary pursuits.

Jerome at Rome.

In 382 we find Jerome at Rome, employed as secretary to Pope Damasus, the prelate whose elevation to the episcopal chair of the imperial city had been signalized by a scene of bloodshed, at the very steps of the altar ; an outrage which marks the fatal tendency of popular nominations to render electors insensible to every consideration, but the fierce claims of partisanship. At this period a council was held at Rome, and a curious accusation of forgery was brought against Jerome. Jerome, in support of an expression ('Dominicus homo,') which he had used in a paper read before the council, produced a MS. of St. Athanasius, in which the same term was applied to Jesus Christ. An Apollinarian requested permission to take the MS. home with him, and having erased the words in the handwriting of Athanasius, wrote them over again, and then pointed to the sentence, as a forgery of Jerome. The accusation was easily refuted, and Jerome speaks of it in his second apology against Rufinus, as an absurd fable: * but absurd as it

* Hieron. Apol. Lib. 2. See Opera Hieron. Vol. iv, Pars 2, p. 415.

was, a more disgraceful attempt to vilify an adversary was never made, nor can our own accomplished age of forgery produce a more ingenious method of throwing discredit on the genuineness of a manuscript. A charge of a much more serious nature was brought against our monk, during his stay at Rome, between the years 382 and 385, and I mention it, to record my entire belief, that it was as unfounded as it was malignant: but truth at the same time demands the admission, that it was one of those scandalous reports, which naturally grow out of imprudent intercourse. The purity of the Christian character requires, that persons professing to be more holy and self-denying than others, should avoid every communication, which exposes them to suspicion. For a long time during his sojournment at Rome, Jerome stood so high in the estimation of all, that he was even talked of as the probable successor of Damasus in the papacy. But whether it was his petulant and overbearing spirit, which first turned the tide of favour against him; whether jealousy of his reputation for sanctity stirred up bad feelings, even in his beloved Rome; or whether the indiscretion of another brought the saint into disrepute,—certain it is, that the clergy of the capital openly accused him of being too familiar with Paula, one * of the 'holy women,' whom he had taken under his spiritual guidance. Marcella

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* 'Les Ecclesiastiques de Rome, dont il reprenoit les mœurs, trouvèrent à redire à sa conduite l'accusation d'avoir trop de familiarité avec Paule.' Du Pin. Biblio. des Aut. Eccl. 3, 376, Note.

A. D. 377—387. and Paula, two young widows, and several unmarried females of rank and fortune, who had resolved to live in celibacy, received Jerome into their houses in the character of their spiritual superintendant, or father confessor, and with them he used to spend much of his time in pious conversation; and particularly in scriptural studies. Scandalous imputations were the consequence: but that Jerome may give his own account of the affair, I subjoin an extract from his letter to Asella, written A. D. 385.

'I have now been living nearly three years among them, (at Rome,) and have been in frequent communication with a crowd of virgins, to some of whom I have expounded the sacred books, as well as I could. This has given rise to attentions,—attentions have been followed by familiarity, and familiarity has produced confidence. But can they say that they ever saw anything in my conduct, which was unworthy of a Christian? Have I ever received money from any of them? Have I not refused even the smallest present? Have I ever polluted myself with a touch of their gold or silver? Has an improper word, or an impure look ever escaped me? Nothing has been objected against me but my sex,—and not even this, until Paula was about to set out for Jerusalem. Before I resorted to the house of the holy Paula, the whole city respected me, and I was unanimously pronounced to be worthy of the pontificate. Damasus, of blessed memory, held confidential discourse with me. I was called holy, humble, and eloquent. Have I ever entered the

abode of a woman of loose behaviour? Have I ever been led away by an admiration of silken garments, or of sparkling gems, or by the love of money? There have been no Roman matrons who could make a greater impression on me, than she who was always mourning and fasting, squalidly dressed, and half blind with weeping; who kept vigils in imploring the mercy of God, and whom the sun found upon her knees after praying all night! Whose songs were psalms, whose discourse was about the Gospel, whose delight was in continence, whose whole life was an act of abstinence. Yes! none could please me but she, whom I never saw eating anything. But when I began to venerate, to cultivate, and to watch her for the sake of her chastity, then it would seem that all my virtue was at an end.' * A. D. 377—387.

There is every reason to acquit Jerome of this charge, and we may believe that he spoke truly; for then *fanaticism*, and nothing softer than *fanaticism*, was his passion: he had no admiration, as he said in another part of his letter, for any countenance which was not attenuated and pale with mortification and fasting; he looked upon the use of the bath, and extreme attention to cleanliness, as a stain worse than dirt.† In fact, Jerome had, by this time, totally subdued his body. Those who have studied human nature, are aware, that extremes meet: and that the man, who had for-

* Epistola ad Asellam 28. aliter 99. Oper. Hier. iv. Pars 2. p. 65.

† 'Tibi placet lavare quotidie: alius has mundicias sordes putat. Bono tuo crassus sis; me macies delectat et pallor.' Ibid. p. 67.

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merly been the prey of concupiscence, might bring himself to regard with the most perfect abhorrence that which was at one time his ruling passion. The calumny, however, did not subside, but was kept alive by those whom Jerome called 'false monks,' 'disorderly celibates,' and 'unworthy ecclesiastics,' and who suborned a servant to bring a distinct charge against the saint and Paula. The unhappy wretch was put to the torture, the usual mode even at a much later period of Christianity than the fourth century, of wringing truth from doubtful witnesses: and he confessed, that he had spoken falsely. But the storm against Jerome was too heavy for him to brave, and in 385 he resolved to turn his back upon Rome for ever,—that Rome which he then called *Babylon*,* but which he once fondly thought to be the '*Holy Home*' of the purest of Christian clergy and laity, among whom nothing corrupt ever entered, and whom he considered to be 'the light of the world,† the salt of the earth, the vessels of gold and silver, the ark of refuge, in which there was no danger, though all without was a deluge of sin and guilt.'

Jerome in Palestine.

Many of the holy women, who were the pupils of Jerome, quitted Rome soon after his departure, and rejoined him at Bethlehem, which, from the year 386 or 387, became the place of his constant abode: and I cannot but think that this open re-

* 'Ora autem ut de Babylone Ierosolyman regrediar.'—Epist. ad Asellam. ibid.

† 'Vos estis lux mundi: vos sal terræ: vos aurea vasa et argentea.' Epist. ad Damasum. ibid. p. 19.

sumption of an intercourse, which had exposed the saint to obloquy, was a proof of conscious integrity and innocence on both sides. There is an end to all confidence in human asseveration, and professions of sanctity, if we are to believe that a man, who professedly devoted his whole life to the recommendation of continence, and whose voluminous writings abound in statements, setting forth the excellence of chastity above all other virtues, was living all the while in impurity with the very persons, whose conduct he was holding up to admiration and example as the perfection of purity and sanctity. Jerome was one of the last men in the world whose opinions or general conduct I could consent to praise; but he was no hypocrite. He was too impulsive to be an actor: he was sincere in his declarations; whether they were the avowals of intolerant hatred of all that was opposed to his notions of right and wrong, or of fanatical adherence to a line of conduct which he deemed to be the only line of perfectibility. If he had been a sensualist, and had lived improperly with women, he would boldly have taken up the defence of such intercourse, as the French St. Simonians did a few years ago. A. D. 377—387.

Before Jerome finally settled at Bethlehem, he made preparations for his correction of the old Latin version of the Bible, and for his own immortal work, which is now called by distinction *the Vulgate*. For this purpose he visited every place in Palestine and Egypt, where he thought he might have opportunities of collating copies of Preparing for the Vulgate.

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Scripture, or of consulting persons learned in biblical knowledge. His intense application to biblical studies gave him a right and title to the gratitude of the whole Church. There was not a MS. upon the subject within his reach, which he did not read with attention, and from which he did not take notes. He searched the libraries of Cæsarea and Alexandria for manuscripts, and never were their treasures opened to more inquiring eyes. He transcribed the Hebrew text of all the books of the Old Testament, with the Hexapla of Origen before him, and collated them with a valuable copy in the Library of Cæsarea, which had the reputation of being authentic. Not satisfied with his own readings and interpretations, or with those of his Christian friends, he read over every passage in the original Hebrew, whereon he had the least doubt, with learned Jews, and took their opinion on the meaning and pronunciation, and correct orthography of words, and on the localities of places, before he would consider his revision to be complete. In all this, there was toil, which could only be rewarded by the consciousness of being employed in a noble undertaking: but another division of his labour was sweetened by some of the most delightful enjoyments, which can fall to the lot of man.

Determined to ascertain the exact position of every spot in the Holy Land, mentioned in the Old and New Testaments, he made a tour of Palestine, and with the sacred books in his hand, he visited the sites of cities and villages, of which the

names will live, till time shall be no more, with the imperishable records in which they are written. To an ardent mind, like that of Jerome, which received every impression as if it were stamped with a seal of fire, what must have been his feelings, when he stood on Horeb, the mount of the Lord? when he traced the steps of Elijah on Mount Carmel? when he followed John the Baptist to the desert, where his early years were passed in meditation and abstinence? when he stood alone in the wilderness, where Jesus is supposed to have fasted forty days and forty nights, and when he knelt on the mountain where his Lord had passed a whole night in prayer? To the hermit, who permitted himself to enjoy but few of the pleasures of life, and who had dragged out years of self-inflicted suffering in the wildest solitudes of Chalcedon, these scenes must have had a charm which surpasses imagination. The unchangeable aspect of the mountain and desert remained the same, and he beheld them, as they are described in the pages of the sacred volume. His spirit was stirred, but I should think in a less degree, by his visit to Jerusalem. There the garden of Gethsemane, which witnessed the agony and bloody sweat of Jesus, the terrible Golgotha, where the last sufferings were endured, and the face of the rock, which gave a sepulchre to the crucified Saviour, no longer retained their original features. Either the exact sites of these places were unknown, or the audacious hand of man had desecrated them by acts of mistaken piety, and

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had removed vestiges and landmarks of awful reality, to erect puny and evanescent memorials of its own, which the same hammer and chisel that constructed could demolish. Thus objects of nature, sanctified by the incarnate presence of their Creator, which would have spoken more intelligibly to the heart and soul than the noblest temple or altar, had been effaced, in order that misdirected zeal might have its local habitation and name, in the form of a perishable church or shrine. Of all presumptuous and blinded acts of devotion that were ever performed, that is most to be deprecated which could disturb the natural traces of the ground, where Jesus suffered and was buried, and could conceal them under constructions of wood and stone. What a profanation! what an invasion of preoccupied holy ground! What an interruption of the most sacred musings, in which the soul can indulge, to pile buildings (under the pretence of consecration) on the rock which was in itself a sanctuary!

'quanto præstantius esset
Numen aquæ, viridi si margine clauderet undas
Herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora top hum.'

Must not the sight of the unchanged scenery, where Christ walked, of Mount Tabor, of the shores of the sea of Galilee, of the hills which environ it, as they are and as they were, be ten thousand times more imposing, and more likely to generate feelings of profound piety, than the domes, which have made the alleged Calvary and

Gethsemane scenes of undistinguishable confusion. To say the least, every one who names the name of Christ must feel his devotion quickened, when he gazes on the undisturbed masses of rock and mountain, where his Redeemer's feet were planted, whilst many cannot but find a stumbling-block in the superstitious purposes, for which shrines have been erected in Jerusalem and its vicinity.* A. D. 377—387.

As soon as Jerome found himself permanently fixed in his 'dear Bethlehem,' (to use his own devout and affectionate language, when he spoke of that venerable place,) he returned to those habits and pursuits which were inseparable from his character: but the ruggedness of his temper was not softened by the sacred associations connected with the birthplace of the Redeemer. Bethlehem was still a small village, distant about six miles from Jerusalem, although the sanctity of the place, and its vicinity to the sacred capital of Palestine, brought many visitors from all parts of the world to pour out their devotions there. Not only the furthest east, and the regions of the south, Persia and India, Armenia and Ethiopia, but the remotest shores of the west also sent pilgrims to worship at the place of Christ's nativity. Our own coun- Bethlehem.

* A sentiment of this kind gleams in one of the pages of Jerome, which describes the cave of Bethlehem. Happy for Christianity if it had been drawn out to its full proportion. 'Ubi instar palatii, opibus privatorum extructæ basilicæ, ut vile corpusculum nominis preciosius inambulet, et quasi mundo quid quam possit esse ornatius, tecta magis sua velit aspicere, quam cælum?'—Op. Hier. iv. p. 551.

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trymen from Britain* were not wanting to swell the number: and the most learned and accomplished men of the day had no greater anxiety than to visit the spot were Jesus was born. Bethlehem was therefore no solitude, and our monk had perpetual opportunities of keeping up his acquaintance with the world, and of hearing what was going on in the various churches of Christendom. It would have been happier for him, if he could have shut out all that was passing among the contentious spirits, who disturbed the peace of the Gospel kingdom; for every piece of intelligence as it reached him, increased the fever of his mind, and drew him off from studies and contemplations, which were more worthy of his attention and of his fame. Considering the frequent interruptions, which his love of disputation occasioned, and how often he suffered his pen to be drawn away from his scriptural labours, and his temper to be chafed by controversy, it is astonishing that he should have found time for the stupendous work of translation in which he engaged. Dissatisfied as we feel with the irritable polemic, yet we must confess that the versatility of his genius, and the amazing perseverance of his mind, stand out in stronger light, when viewed beside the darker traits of his character. After having been driven beyond all the bounds of reason and decency, by the violence of his indignation against some unfortunate writer, who had excited his spleen, he

* Epist. 44. Op. Hier. iv. 551. See also in Isa. xiv.

could return to his corrected edition of the old Latin translation of Scripture, or to his new translation, or to his Commentary, with as much diligence and close application, as if he had never wandered from his subject. Let the reader reflect on what sort of application these works required; and that he may form a right estimate of the frame of mind and body under which they were conducted, let him take into account, that Jerome sat down to his papers and parchments, with a body attenuated by long-continued abstinence, and weakened by fasting. Herbs and black bread were his daily fare, and the quantity which he took of this poor nourishment was so small, that he must have been constantly suffering under hunger and exhaustion. Wine and meat he pronounced to be an absolute profanation to those who had devoted themselves, as he had done, to God: and even a morsel of fish, or a mid-day meal, was a violation of the rules of abstinence by which he thought a recluse ought to be governed.* A. D. 377—387.

* There is a curious instance of the credulity of Jerome, in one of his tirades against the use of viands. In his second treatise against Jovinian, he professes to have seen people of a British tribe who were cannibals, and who, when they had plenty of cattle at command, preferred to eat human flesh: he even enumerates the parts of the human body which these British man-eaters considered dainties. 'Quid loquar de cæteris nationibus, quum ipse adolescentulus in Galliâ viderim Atticotos, gentem Britannicam humanis vesci carnibus, et quum per sylvas porcorum greges, et armentorum pecudumque reperiant, pastorum nates et feminarum et papillas abscindere solere, et has solas delicias ciborum arbitrari.'—Adv. Jovini. Lib. secund. Op. Hier. 4. Pars II. p. 201.

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The labours of Jerome.

It was under such circumstances that this indefatigable man undertook his laborious tasks of translation and exposition. For the first, he had to collate various readings, to consult difficult and time-worn manuscripts, to authenticate and compare the interpretations of previous commentators, to correct verbal and literal errors; to exercise his judgment in replacing passages which had been improperly omitted, and in rejecting those which had been interpolated: to examine different versions, the Greek, Syriac, and Ethiopic: and to translate them all with the help of linguists, whom he had to select for the associates of his labours. (One of these was a Jew named Baraninas, who, like Nicodemus, for fear of the Jews, came to him by night, and compelled him to undertake nocturnal labour*). And all this he had to do upon his own individual responsibility! Such was his bold undertaking. Ptolemy, if the traditions relating to the Septuagint be true, thought seventy fellow-workers not too many for the completion of a correct translation. Our own authorized version was, in the first instance, committed to fifty-four. Jerome did not shrink from placing the burthen upon his own shoulders only, in spite of the jealousy, suspicion, and calumnies which assailed him for his presumption, as it was styled, in supposing that the long-cherished Septuagint was defective, and required to be superseded by a new version. To this laborious undertaking he

* See Hieron. Epist. 41, p. 342, ibid.

added the equally toilsome task of commenting on the sacred volume, and this too, be it remembered, when his eyes were so weak and his body so feeble, that he was obliged to employ an amanuensis. He could not write, he could only read and dictate, yet at one great effort he translated the three books of Solomon in three days, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. It was not unusual with him to complete about one thousand lines * (or, according to Tillemont's calculation, thirty or forty pages,) of his Commentary in a single day. Johnson's Rasselas was written in a week. Jerome wrote his Treatise against Vigilantius, of five hundred lines, in one night.

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I cannot leave this portion of Jerome's biography without adding a few more remarks on the greatness of that undertaking on which his fame rests. A new translation of the Scriptures for the use of the Church in general, and especially of the Western Church, had become necessary, in consequence of the variations and corruptions which had crept into the Septuagint and Latin versions. There were many Latin versions † afloat, not only among Christians, but among the Jews and heathens also; for by this time no man of any preten-

The Vulgate.

* 'Interdum per singulos dies usque ad numerum mille versuum pervenire.'—Præf in Epist. ad Eph. c. iii. Ibid. Pars I. p. 347.

† 'Latinorum interpretum infinita varietas. Qui enim Scripturas ex Hebræa lingua in Græcam verterunt numerari possunt, Latini autem interpretes nullo modo.'—See Aug. de doctr. Chr. Lib. II. c. II.

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sions to philosophy or learning, could suffer himself to be ignorant of the contents of that book, which was turning the world upside down. Heretical professors of the gospel, Hebrew doctors, and cavillers of every description, from the half-converted to the declared infidel, were glad enough to exhibit copies of the Old or New Testament, with false readings, and passages rendered questionable either by omissions, or interpolations. This not only increased the number of copies, but also of separate translations of scripture, especially in the prevailing language of the Roman empire of the West. The Latin version preferred before all others was called by some authors, *Versio Itala*,* by others *Versio* or *translatio Vetus*,† and by others, *Versio Communis et Vulgata*. *Communis*, *Vulgata*, and *Itala*, because it was read publicly in all the churches of Italy, France, Spain, Africa, and Germany, where the Latin was understood; and *Vetus*, on account of its being more ancient than any of the rest. But even this was not free from corruptions. It was held in such veneration, however, that it was as dangerous for Jerome to dispute its purity, as it would now be for any of us to assail the authorised English version. But Jerome was not a man to be turned from his purpose by clamour. Careless of evil report or good report, he commenced and proceeded with his work, and he continued toiling at it, through all the trying

* Aug. de doc. Christ. II. 15.

† Greg. Mag. Lib. Mor. Præfat.

obstacles which jealousy, malevolence, infirmities of body, and distractions from various causes, opposed to him, until he brought it to a triumphant conclusion. It is not certain that he re-translated every passage in the New Testament ; some ambiguous sentences, in one or two of the prefaces to his sacred books, leave it open to conjecture, that he may have been satisfied with correcting some of the epistles. The Psalms were also left for the most part as he found them, for two reasons : first, because their constant use in the daily services of public worship rendered them less liable to the introduction of false readings; and secondly, because their adaptation to music, and the general practice of learning them by heart, would have rendered any new form of words both inconvenient and unpopular. A. D. 387—395.

It required time, and the removal of many prejudices, and of long-cherished predilections, before Jerome's translation could be received into the church as *the Vulgate.* The old *Vulgate,* or *Versio Itala,** retained its place for many years after Jerome's death. Even during the pontificate of Gregory the Great, the *old* Vulgate was cited for its authority, as frequently as the *new.* The

* ' Novam vero translationem dissero, sed ut comprobationis causa exigit, nunc novam, nunc veterem per testimonia assumo, ut, quia sedes apostolorum, Deo auctore præsidio, utraque utitur, mei quoque labor studii ex utraque fulciatur.' Greg. Mag.—Tom. I. p. 3. Epistola de Lib. Moral. c. 4.

Gregory however seems to have preferred Jerome's, or the new translation, ' In posteriori autem translatione quam et veraciorem credimus,' &c.—In Ezech. Lib. I. Hom. X. Oper. Gr. Tom. I. p. 1265.

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church at large used each, and Gregory spoke of the two, as *the new* and the *ancient* translation.*

To Jerome, therefore, belongs the honour of having taken a work in hand, which has been the

* By way of specimen, and to show the difference between the old version, the *Versio Itala*, and that of Jerome, I annex two passages, cited by Augustine, 'De cura gerenda pro mortuis', c. 16 and 20, with the corresponding verses in Jerome's translation.

*Versio Itala, vetus.*

'Hæc dicit Dominus Deus Israel: verba mea quæ audisti, et veritus es à facie mea cum audisti quæ locutus sum de isto loco, et qui commorantur in eo, ut deseratur, et in maledicto sit; et conscidisti vestimenta tua, et flevisti in conspectu meo; et ego audivi, dixit dominus Sabaoth: non sic, ecce ego apponam te ad patres tuos, et apponeris cum pace: et non videbunt oculi tui omnia mala, quæ ego induco in locum hunc, et qui commorantur in eo.'—4 Kings xxii. 18—20.

'Alii quidem datur per Spiritum sermo sapientiæ; alii sermo scientiæ secundum eundem Spiritum: alteri autem fides in eodem spiritu, alteri donatio curationum in uno spiritu, alii operationes virtutum, alii prophetia, alii dijudicatio Spirituum, alii genera linguarum, alii interpretatio sermonum. Omnia autem hæc operatur unus atque idem spiritus, dividens propria unicuique prout vult.'—1 Cor. xii. 8—11.

*Versio Hieronymi Nova.*

'Hæc dicit dominus Deus Israel. Pro eo quod audisti verba voluminis, et perterritum est cor tuum, et humiliatus es coram domino, auditis sermonibus contra locum istum, et habitatores ejus, quod videlicet fierent in stuporem et in maledictum; et scidisti vestimenta tua, et flevisti coram me, et ego audivi, ait dominus, idcirco colligam te ad patres tuos, et colligeris ad sepulcrum tuum in pace, ut non videant oculi tui omnia mala quæ inducturus sum super locum istum.'—4 Kings xxii. 18—20.

'Alii quidem per Spiritum datur sermo sapientiæ, alii autem sermo scientiæ secundum eundem Spiritum: alteri fides in eodem Spiritu: alii gratia sanitatum in uno Spiritu, alii operatio virtutum, alii prophetia, alii discretio Spirituum, alii genera linguarum, alii interpretatio sermonum. Hæc autem omnia operatur unus atque idem spiritus, dividens singulis prout vult.'—1 Cor. xii. 8—11.

means of illustrating and purifying and preserving one of the noblest versions of scripture; and he carried it on perseveringly, notwithstanding the obloquy and painful labour to which it exposed him. That it was not free from errors, he himself confessed; in fact, what translation from an ancient tongue can ever be pronounced to be perfect? But its general clearness and fidelity have been almost universally admitted, and the principal errors which appear in the modern editions of the Vulgate, and which support the dogmas of Rome, are to be ascribed to the Sixtine and Clementine revisions, rather than to the pen of Jerome himself. If the assiduity of one man, if his faithfulness, learning, research, patience, and prayer, could have bequeathed a translation of scripture to posterity, free from vital defects, Jerome took the right mode to leave us so precious a legacy. But the thing is an impossibility; no individual is competent to a task, which has hitherto defeated the endeavours of every labourer, who has trusted to his own single strength.

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Besides his translations and revisions of scripture, the principal works which occupied the attention of Jerome, during the first years of his abode at Bethlehem, say from 387 to 395, were commentaries on the epistles to Philemon, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to Titus: Commentaries also on some of the minor prophets: Quæstiones Hebraicæ, and Translations of the Homilies of Origen.

Jerome at this period of time confined himself

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to Bethlehem, but when he spoke of shutting himself up in his cell, and there passing his time in penitence and tears, in preparation for the day of judgment, we are not to understand, that he literally made a close prisoner of himself between the four walls of his little hermitage. On the contrary, he lived in intercourse with the company of monks and nuns, so to call them, for whom the celebrated Paula had provided a retreat in the sacred village. The establishment consisted of a church, and four monasteries: three for women and one for men. Over this community, Jerome exercised an influence, which he himself compared to episcopal authority. In fact it was nothing less than an invasion of the jurisdiction of the bishop of Jerusalem to set up an *imperium in imperio* of this kind, and the open quarrel which took place between Jerome and his monks, and John, bishop of Jerusalem,* showed that monastic houses, from the very nature of their constitution, had a tendency to undermine the authority of the bishops. The history of this quarrel affords a striking instance of the miserable divisions, and scandalous disorders, which disgraced the church in the fourth century; and it is one which makes thinking men shrink from the idea of taking it as an example, or of shaping their conduct according to such ricketty framework.

Monastic Institutions at Bethlehem.

* John is mentioned by Paulinus in a Letter to Sulpicius, (Epist. 2. aliter 31.) in terms of the highest respect.—'Sancti Episcopi Joannis.' The French translator reads, 'Bienheureux Jean evêque de Jerusalem.'

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Jerome's quarrel with Rufinus.

But the unhappy difference between Jerome and his bishop, was not the only one which embittered his spirit and increased the natural acerbity of his temper at this juncture. A rupture between himself and Rufinus of Aquileia, with whom he had been on terms of confidential intimacy for many years, had been increasing for some time past, in consequence of their recriminations in regard to opinions concerning Origen. This fatal Origenist question was one, on which Jerome had no command over himself. He was conscious that he had laid himself open to animadversion, and even to suspicion, by many of his writings and conversations relating to that author: and that there was at least an appearance of inconsistency in the severity, with which he now assailed those who were accused of having a leaning towards some of Origen's errors. In the controversy with Rufinus, whether Jerome was right or wrong in his premises, or in his treatment of the subject, and in the use of his arguments, it is admitted on all sides,* that he betrayed a petulant and vindictive spirit, and gave loose to the worst passions of his nature, in a manner which is totally unjustifiable. When Augustine undertook to be a mediator between them, he studiously abstained from expressing his opinion as to who was right or wrong. He certainly never declared himself for Jerome, or spoke severely against Rufinus. The question therefore naturally arises,—if Jerome could so glaringly lay himself open to censure in

* See Tillemont, Du Pin, and Fleury on this subject.

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this controversy with Rufinus, a man of undoubted respectability,* what dependence can we place on his judgment, his veracity, or on his fair dealing as a disputant, when he was embroiled with Vigilantius and others? The same tastes and pursuits, the same mode of life, the same kind of reputation, as an ascetic, and the adviser of ascetics, which distinguished Jerome, rendered Rufinus also *in like manner*, if not *equally*, eminent among his contemporaries. As Jerome kept up an intercourse of the most intimate kind with Paula, so Rufinus was seldom separated from Melanie; and was the constant companion of her journies for spiritual objects. As Jerome, in his hermitage at Bethlehem, counselled and comforted those who went thither to have their vows of celibacy fortified, so Rufinus, in his cell on the mount of Olives, was consulted by bishops and monks, virgins and widows, married and unmarried, gentle and simple, rich and poor, and gave many of them the aid not only of his advice, but also of his pecuniary assistance. 'He was irreproachable,' says Tillemont, 'in his life and conduct, however he may have given occasion to his adversaries to censure him on articles of faith.'

That which exasperated Jerome against Rufinus, at this time, was the suspicion he entertained, that Rufinus was implicated in a transaction, which

* See the testimony of Paulinus to this effect, 'Ipsam adnotationem direxi ad Rufinum presbyterum, sanctæ Melaniæ spirituali via comitem, *vere sanctum*, et *pie doctum*, et ob hoc intima mihi affectione conjunctum.'—Epistola Paulini 9, ad Sulp. Sev. aliter 28.

his general character will not suffer us to impute to him. A translation of the Letter of Epiphanius to John of Jerusalem, on the errors of Origen, had been sent by Jerome to Eusebius of Cremona. A monk, who had access to the apartments of Eusebius, stole his papers; garbled copies of the translation were circulated among the enemies of Jerome, and the latter accused Rufinus of having suborned the monk to commit this injury.* A. D. 387—395.

From that moment the most acrimonious correspondence passed between them, and Jerome could seldom write or speak of Rufinus without the utmost virulence. Both were to blame in the contest that arose between them, and in the bitter spirit with which it was carried on, and we cannot but exclaim,—'Was this the conduct befitting two persons of such reputed sanctity? Were these the peacemakers and counsellors, worthy of being consulted as oracles, the one on the Mount of Olives, and the other on the spot where Christ was born, and where angels had sung good will to men?'

In the meantime Jerome was continuing his scriptural studies with as much perseverance and ardour, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt his labours, or to unhinge his mind; and his reputation for sanctity was so great, that testimonies of respect were poured in upon him from all parts of Christendom. A singular proof, of the value in

* 'See Epist. Hieron. ad Pam. 38, aliter 101. Op. Hier. 4. Pars II. p. 248.

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which his works were held, was given by the arrival of six strangers at Bethlehem, who said they came from Lucrinus, a pious and wealthy Spaniard, who had sent them thither, with the request, that they might be permitted to take copies of all his works. It was about the same period, the beginning of the year 395, that Vigilantius brought a letter from Paulinus of Nola to Jerome. This was the first occasion of a personal acquaintance between the reformer of the Pyrenees, and the monk of Bethlehem, and we may now proceed with the main branch of our subject, the Memorials of Vigilantius.

## CHAP. VI.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 364—390.

VIGILANTIUS was born about the year A.D. 364 * in the Gallic village of Calagorris, (now called Houra, according to Vaissette, Vol. I, p. 57, and not Caseres as some have supposed,) situated at the foot of the Pyrenees, on the northern side of the mountains, and belonging to the district of Convenæ,—the present Comminges. The place was so called, because the first settlers came from Calagorris in Spain,† when Pompey dispersed a

Birthplace and origin of Vigilantius.

* 'It is not easy to give the exact date of his birth. In a letter to Paulinus Vigilantius is termed '*puer*' in the year 394. But he was ordained priest in 394 or 395, and 'puer' may signify a domestic. When the word referred to age, it was used very arbitrarily. Thus Jerome applied it to himself, when he was in his fifteenth, twenty-fourth, and thirtieth year.'—See Jerome's Commentaries on Habakkuk iii. Isaiah xv. and Obadiah.

† 'Baronius, mistaking the Gallic for the Spanish town, wrote a long note to prove that Vigilantius was a Spaniard. 'Calagurris sita erat in regione antiquorum Vasconum, et valde credibile, hos Hispanos, relicta patria, quibusdam suis pagis eorum nomina è quibus originem duxerant, imposuisse.'—Pagi. Critica Hist. Chronol. Vol. II. p. 74.

The Gallic Calagorris was near Lugdunum Convenarum. In D'Anville's large Map of Modern France, there is a Chateau Leon,

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large body of brigands, who infested that part of the country, and compelled them to retire into Gaul. It is probable that the birth-place of Vigilantius had much to do in the formation of his character, and that he was indebted to the spot, where he drew his first breath, for that lofty and independent spirit which he carried with him through life. A mountaineer has many advantages over the inhabitant of a crowded city. He inhales a pure and invigorating air; he has magnificent and inspiring objects perpetually before him: he is invited to range amongst solitudes, and to commune with his own heart, amidst those majestic features of nature, which declare the glory of God and the insignificance of man. His daily occupation prepares him for noble pursuits, and when he is cultivating his patch of ground on the edge of a precipice, or leading his flocks and herds to the mountain pasturage, or guiding strangers through the dangers and intricacies of a mountain pass, he is trained to forethought, and inured to hardship. Even his diversions have the same effect, and throw him constantly on his own resources: for whether he pursues the chase to supply his table with food, or to drive the wolf and the bear from the fold, it is a school of discipline, where the best hunter usually becomes the best leader in war, and the wisest sage in counsel. There is another

which may have derived its name from the ancient *Lugdunum* Convenarum. Mr. Faber has suggested that the old term *Leonists*, as applied to the Waldenses, may have been given to them from 'Vigilantius the *Leonist*, who resided some time among their ancestors.'—See Faber on Election, p. 441, and Vallenses and Albigenses, p. 279.

and a higher advantage in being born a mountaineer. Mountain tribes are generally the most unwilling to receive either the yoke or the corruptions of the stranger: for the children of the mountain and the field are too familiar with the glorious works of God's hands, to take impressions from the childish baubles that foster idolatry. The father of Vigilantius was an inn-keeper, descended from one of those robbers, whom Pompey chased out of Spain. Jerome sneers at this ignoble parentage, and makes the pedigree and birth-place of Vigilantius the subject of his coarse jokes. There are however some considerations which may reconcile us to the place and circumstances of our 'holy presbyter's' birth. Four hundred years, the interval between the time of Pompey and that of Vigilantius, are enough to wipe away any genealogical stain; and if it were not so, Roman and English history at least present sufficient apology for the crime of being derived from such ancestry. Would our most ancient Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman families care for the reproach of having their line traced up to the followers of those pirates and freebooters, Hengist and Rollo? And as to being born in an humble inn, there is one event, which might have induced a Christian writer to refrain from any expression of contempt on that score. But so far from deriving a stigma from it, to the inn at Calagorris Vigilantius was indebted for the early Christian bias of his mind, and for his first attainments in general knowledge. That inn was placed exactly where a youth of emulous and

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aspiring disposition would have good opportunities of acquiring important information, and of being instructed in the events which were passing in the political and religious world.

This Calagorris was situated at the entrance of the defiles of the Pyrenees, on the great paved road which led from Aquitain into Spain. There were two main branches of this road; the eastern, which crossed the Pyrenees between the modern provinces of Rousillon and Catalonia; and the western, which directing its course at the foot of the mountains, through the districts now called Comminges, Bearn, and Lower Navarre, attained the summit near the celebrated pass of Roncevalles, and then descended towards Pampeluna. On this last mentioned branch was Calagorris, at no great distance from one of the sources of the Garonne. In the language of the itinerary of Antonine,* (which places it twenty-six Roman miles from Lugdunum Convenarum, now called St. Bertrand,† and sixteen from Aquæ Siccæ,

* Item ab Aquis Tarbellicis Tolosam, M. P. CXXXIII.

| | |
|---|---|
| Beneharnum - - - | M. P. XVIIII. |
| Oppidum novum - - - | M. P. XVIII. |
| *Aquas Convenarum* - - | M. P. VIII. |
| *Lugdunum* - - - | M. P. XVI. |
| *Calagorgem* - - - | M. P. XXVI. |
| Aquassiccas - - - | M. P. XVI. |
| Vernosolem - - - | M. P. XV. |
| Tolosam - - - - | M. P. XV. |

Itinerarium Antonini. De Hisp. in Aquitaniam.

† 'St. Bertrand de Comenge. Ceste cite ést appelleé dans la Notice des Provinces *Civitas Convenarum* et dans Gregoire de Tours *Convenæ*. Je croye que ceste ville a esté anciennement appelleé Lugdunum Convenarum, car dans le voyager d'Antonine *Lugdunum*

now Rieux ;) it is called a *mansio* or *station*, to distinguish it from the *town* or *civitas*.* At each mansio or station there was accommodation for travellers, and relays of horses † were provided by the State to convey despatches or government-messengers ; and persons travelling officially, or under the imperial favour, might be whirled along at the rate of nearly nine Roman miles an hour ‡ in light

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se trouve marqué sur le chemin de *Benearnum* (qui est la ville de Lescar en Bearn) à Tolose, ce qui Strabon esclaircit encore mieux au livre 4 de sa Géographie, où il remarque que dans le pays de Comenge, aux monts Pyrenées il y a une ville nommée *Lugdunum*.'

' Gregoire de Tours, c. 34, du livre 7 de son Histoire escrit que la ville de Comenge est assise au sommet d'une Montagne. C'est pourquoy tout ainsi que la ville de Lyon a esté appellée Lugdunum, du mot ancien Gaulois Dunum.' Catel. Mem. de l'Histoire du Languedoc, p. 316.

* ' Ad has vias locatæ sunt civitates, atque mansiones, quæ manendi, et quiescendi causâ, hospitia necessariis ad vitæ usum instructa habuerunt: et mutationes (sic etiam vocavit illa ætas) ubi veredos, jumenta, et vehicula, mutarent peregrinantes.'—Camden. Romani in Britannia. p. 45.

' Nous avons parlé des cités il faut à present traiter des mutations et mansions. Et d'autant qu'en l'un et l'autre il falloit faire quelques arrests et stations, scavoir aux mutations pour changer de chevaux, et aux mansions pour demeurer au giste, dela est arrivé, que les mansions et les mutations ont comprises sur le nom commun de *stations* comme qui diroit repos ou arrest.'—Bergier Hist. des grands Chemins de l'Empire. Liv. iv. c. 9, p. 638.

† ' Equos stabularios quos alebat Respublica.'—Zosimus. Hist.

‡ ' Si quis cogitet nocte ac die longissimum iter vehiculis tribus Tiberium Neronem emensum, festinantem ad Drusum fratrem ægrotum in Germania: in eo fuerunt C.C.M. Passuum.'—Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. vii. c. 20.

But though they might travel in those days at great speed on the high roads, the wise and humane laws, which protected the cattle employed on them from ill usage, would do honour to more refined times. The number of horses to be yoked, according to the size and weight of the carriage, the number of persons to be conveyed, and the

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two-wheeled cars, (birotæ,) or four-wheeled carriages, (rhedæ,) drawn by horses or mules. These stations were farmed by individuals, who, (as they do now in some countries,) made large fortunes by the speculation in post-horses: no less than forty horses, besides other beasts of burthen, being kept at some of them.

The father of Vigilantius had charge of the station at Calagorris, and the great wealth which his son afterwards possessed, and which he employed so well, was the inheritance derived from the profits of that situation. But we have no other particulars to relate of the boyhood of Vigilantius, than that he was brought up at this Pyrenean *mansio*, and that it was his humble occupation to wait on travellers, as servant of the inn, driver of the post-horses, and guide across the mountains. How he was educated we know not; Jerome insinuates that he was badly educated, that he spent his youth in the same occupation as his father, in adulterating wine, as he afterwards adulterated Scripture, and that he was always equally defective in knowledge and in diction. But if so, why was Jerome so much disturbed by the opposition of this reformer?

His early opportunities of acquiring knowledge.

We may reasonably suppose that the house, in

quantity of baggage to be laid on each, were distinct subjects of legislation in the Theodosian code. The *Rheda* was not permitted to carry more than a thousand pounds weight, and the Birota two hundred pounds weight. Two persons, or three at the most, were considered enough for the Birota, and it was expressly forbidden to beat the horses with heavy sticks, or to treat them with any degree of cruelty.—Codex Theod. de Curcu. pub. lib. 35. Bergier, p. 646, 651.

which Vigilantius spent his early years, gave him opportunities of picking up information, and acquiring a taste for general knowledge; for it was the resort of many illustrious characters, who travelled by this route into Spain from Aquitain. The frequent councils and synods which were held at this period, induced the most celebrated men of the day to undertake long journeys from province to province; and with some of these, the subject of our memoir may have become acquainted, when they rested at Calagorris, or were pursuing their way to the next station or relay, under his guidance.* The state of the public roads,† and the safe and speedy communication which was then established between the most distant kingdoms of the earth, have been frequently mentioned among the secondary causes of success in the promulgation of the gospel. A. D. 364—390.

General intercourse was, at the least, much facilitated, and it is not a mere flight of the imagination to presume that Vigilantius acquired his first knowledge of Christian truth, in his conversation with the bishops and clergy, who were on their way to the provincial capitals on each side

* Ammianus, (Hist. 21, and 16.) speaking of these councils, says, 'the highways were covered with troops of bishops, galloping from every side to the assemblies which they call synods, and the public establishments of the posts were almost ruined by their frequent and hasty journeys.'

† The public roads were so good, that even the passage of the Alps and Pyrenees, especially of the latter, was considered an undertaking of perfect ease. 'Tam brevis enim et facilis via est, ut nec in Pyrenæo ardua sit, qui Narbonensi ad Hispanias agger, nomen magis quam jugum horrendus, interjacet.'—Paul. Epist. vi p. 102.

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of the Pyrenees. There were several councils held during the youth of Vigilantius, any one of which may have given him an opportunity of receiving religious impressions, from the eminent ecclesiastics who were crossing and recrossing the mountains, and who were expedited on their way by means of the conveniences which his father's inn and relays afforded. The Council of Saragossa, in 380, which brought hither St. Delphinus from Bourdeaux, and St. Phebadius from Agen, was likely to make him acquainted with these two friends of Sulpicius Severus and Paulinus, who afterwards took him under their patronage. The Council of Bordeaux, assembled in 384, for the purpose of investigating the heresy of the Priscillianists, was another occasion to which we may attribute a religious movement in the young mountaineer's mind, when that synod caused so many who were interested in the enquiry, to pass by the posting-house at Calagorris. There is every reason to believe that he had the advantage of early intercourse with St. Exuperius, Bishop of Thoulouse, who was his protector in after life, when Jerome endeavoured to stir up a spirit of persecution against him. Exuperius, if tradition says rightly, was a native of the same district, and was born in a village now called Aure,* at no great distance from the birth-place of Vigilantius: but whatever impression he may have received from others, to Sulpicius Severus he was indebted for his settled conversion.

* See Tillemont, Mem. Eccles. x. p. 620, and Catel. Mem. Hist. du Languedoc. p. 820.

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Patronised by Sulpicius Severus.

Sulpicius had estates on both sides of the Pyrenees, and having become acquainted with Vigilantius in the course of his journeys across the mountains, he took him into his employment, first as 'a simple domestic,' and afterwards as the superintendent of some of his lands in Spain. Vaissette * states that Vigilantius had the receipt of rents confided to him, with the sale of the Gallic historian's vintage. This is not unlikely, considering the business in which his father was engaged, and his own judgment in the taste and value of wines, (another matter of reproach in the eyes of Jerome†); but contrary to Vaissette's usual practice, he does not furnish us with the authority on which his statement rests. The youth, who was tapster, and waiter,‡ or money-taker at his father's inn, may have been received into the service of Sulpicius with a view to his being employed in a capacity, for which his former habits suited him; but we have no occasion to shrink from contemplating his character in either of these lowly stations. It is certain that he became the friend and confidant of the eminent man who first took him into his service as a 'simple domestic,' and the lower the grade from which he rose, the greater must have been his merit. There were two kinds of servants in Gaul and Spain at that period,—the purchased slave, and the hired

* 'Sevère Sulpice, dont il fut d'abord simple domestique, lui confia ensuite, à ce qu'il paroit, le soin de quelque terre qu'il avoit en Espagne, avec celui de la recepte de ses revenues, et de la vente de son vin.'—Vaissette Hist. du Languedoc. Vol. I. p. 152.

† Hieron, Op. IV. Pars II. p. 281. ‡ Ibid. p. 277.

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dependent; and in each case they were often admitted to great familiarity with their masters, and rose to situations of trust and importance. Vigilantius was of the latter class, and the letters of Paulinus to Sulpicius, as will be shown presently, speak of him in terms, which assure us, that whatever place he filled in the household of Sulpicius, he was in the enjoyment of the historian's entire confidence and warm affection.

I am unable to state the precise time, when the subject of this memoir first attracted the notice of Sulpicius, or when he was received into the historian's service; but I cannot be very wrong, if I suppose it to have been in the year 390, and that his first employment was not that of a menial servant, for it led to his being confidentially appointed to a charge, requiring both integrity and judgment. Whether as steward, receiver of rents, or overseer of the vintage, Vigilantius had established his character for trust-worthiness; and when he obtained his third step in the establishment of his patron, it must again have been one of marked distinction. He was called from the management of the estate in Spain, to take up his abode in one of the villas of Sulpicius, situated between Thoulouse and Narbonne; but whether this was Primuliac, now Prumilli, or Eluso, the modern Alzonne, is uncertain. The French editors of the Letters of Paulinus think that the latter was the historian's principal residence* at this

* Les Lettres de S. Paulin, p. 17, Note.

time ; and Vaissette inclines to the same opinion.* Sulpicius was unquestionably living there in 393, or 394, for it was from Eluso that he then despatched an epistle to Paulinus at Barcelona.† Its vicinity to the estate, which his friend Paulinus had at Ebromagus, renders it still more likely that he continued to dwell there, as long as there was any chance of Paulinus returning to Aquitain. When this was no longer to be expected, Sulpicius retired to Primuliac, where we find him in 395,‡ and it was there that he built his celebrated church and monastery. But whether it was at Eluso or Primuliac, that Vigilantius was received into the house of Sulpicius after his return from Spain, he had every opportunity of improving his mind, and of mixing with the best literary and religious society in the province. It is probable that he was here employed as an amanuensis or copyist, and was laying the foundation of that scriptural knowledge which afterwards enabled him to encounter no less an opponent than Jerome himself. Ausonius and Claudian, Prudentius and Paulinus, Delphinus, Amandus, Exuperius, and the most distinguished men in Aquitain were the associates of Sulpicius; and there was not a wayfaring stranger of any reputation, who did not visit him, on his road between Bordeaux and Narbonne : so that everything that passed in the Christian world was communicated to the inmates of the

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His associates and studies in the house of Sulpicius.

* Histoire generale du Languedoc. Vol. I. p. 634—636.

† See Epist. Paul. ad Sulp. 6.

‡ Epist. Paul ad Sulp. Sev. I.

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villa, either by travellers from distant parts, or persons who were in correspondence with friends in the great capitals of the east and west. This would naturally lead to the discussion of theological subjects, and to that interchange of opinion on the great questions of faith and discipline, then agitated in the church, which conduced to make the young mountaineer a serious thinker and an anxious enquirer at this early period of his life. The house of Sulpicius was exactly the place where his attention would be directed to the very points of investigation, in which he afterwards took so prominent a part. Sacred history, and the practices of the primitive ages, were the especial meditations of Sulpicius, until he was persuaded to abandon them for the fables which Martin and the monks of Egypt brought into vogue, and Vigilantius could not see him take up his new pursuits without contrasting them with his former studies and habits.

Austerities and monkish legends were novelties gradually introduced at Eluso and Primuliac, and did not all at once supplant the simpler observances of Christian worship, and the nobler contemplations of Christian perfection, commended to attention by the apostolical writers. Happily it was the brighter side of Sulpicius, which was first presented to the view of Vigilantius. Sulpicius writing an abridgment of the Bible, and occupied daily in consulting and transcribing scripture ;—Sulpicius humbly endeavouring to imitate the best patterns of Christianity, feeding

the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, receiving the wanderer into his house, and regulating his whole life by evangelical precepts;—Sulpicius building churches, and promoting public and family worship;—Sulpicius gathering about him the learned, and the pious, and the wise, and discussing religious subjects;—Sulpicius in the height of his fame, when everybody admired and loved him, gave a right bias to the mind of Vigilantius, before he entered upon that new path which it was not safe to follow. A. D. 390—394.

Change in the habits and character of his patron.

But a blight was cast over the well-spent life of Sulpicius when that evil counsellor, Martin of Tours, persuaded him, that all his benevolent and pious actions would not enable him to escape the everlasting fire reserved for the wicked, unless he made for himself a Gehenna and Inferno* upon earth, by the practice of the most rigid penances. Under the influence of such baneful advice, Sulpicius began to convert a household of faith into a scene of the grossest superstition. He denied himself the necessaries of life; he exhausted his strength by long fastings and devotional exercises, which lasted through the greater part of the twenty-four hours of every day; he tore his body with scourges, and invented new modes of self-punishment. When these inflictions failed to bring him peace of mind, he redoubled his contributions to charitable purposes, and thought to

* 'Te contra infelicem et in luto fæcis infernæ adhærentem ingemiscas, quod vel unum, ut scripsisti, prædiolum non vendidisse videaris.'—Epist. Paulini ad Sulp. Sev. 2.

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purchase a sure interest in heaven by alms-deeds, which exceeded all that he had done before. But he was still goaded on to make further sacrifices, and was exhorted never to be satisfied with himself until he had sold all and given to the poor.* In the midst of all his self-denial, he was racked with doubts and suspicions, and haunted by a phantom, which accused him of reserving too much for himself out of his own property, and of not having been sufficiently unsparing in the maceration of his body; of not having duly prolonged his fastings and watchings; of not having adopted a more painful posture in his exercises of devotion. This proceeded from want of faith, and he resorted to the extremes of self-denial as a means of making satisfaction for his sins, because he did not place true reliance on, or feel security in his Saviour's atonement. He did not look to his Redeemer for the full and entire expiation of his sins, but adopted the belief, that the ransom was incomplete without some sufferings of his own, and that the uttermost farthing of his debt to an inexorable God could not be paid, so long as he enjoyed any one earthly comfort.† In vain did the better advisers of Sulpicius remonstrate with him, and endeavour to assure him, that a benevolent use of his property would be a fulfilment of the aposto-

* See Sulp. Sev. de Vita Martini, c. 26. 'Vendendo omnia et dando pauperibus.'

† These facts are collected from the tenor of some of the Epistles of Paulinus, in which the writer makes allusion to the self-accusations of Sulpicius. See especially Epist. II. Paul. ad Sulp. Sev.

lical precept, " to do good, and to distribute;" and that it was enough to be a faithful steward of the charge committed to him. He was dissatisfied with himself, and became more and more miserable. Even Paulinus expostulated with him on some of his unreasonable self-accusations, in a letter which gives a beautiful description of his mode of life. A. D. 390—394.

'You are fulfilling the Apostle's injunction, possessing all things, as though you possessed not; having only for the sake of those who have nothing. You still live indeed in your own house, but only as a steward to provide for others. You are as a pilgrim in your own country, and consider this world as the place of your exile, that you may become an inhabitant of Paradise, and the citizen of a better country.' *

The letter proceeds to inform us, that the display of grandeur, common in the mansions of per-

* The letter of Paulinus, from which this extract is taken, contains a curious passage relating to the number 300. I transcribe it as a sample of the superstitions of the fourth century.

'It was not with a great number of soldiers, nor with armed legions, that this holy man (Abraham) triumphed over the princes, his enemies, but with only three hundred of his servants, that is to say, by the power of the cross, represented by the Greek letter T, which, in the arithmetic of that language, signified *three hundred*, and we may add that it was by the same power that the ark of Noah, floating on the waters, a type of the Church in the world, was raised three hundred cubits above the earth.'

This fanciful and mystic interpretation is ascribed originally to Barnabas. Tertullian, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, and several others, indulged in the same extravagant opinions of the hidden meaning of the Number 300, as represented by the Greek letter T.—See Rosweyd, Notes on the Second Epistle of Paulinus.

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sons of his rank, was not to be seen in that of Sulpicius. No festal halls were there, no rich tapestry, no gold and silver plate, but it was filled with multitudes of poor pilgrims, whilst he himself occupied only a small corner of it. He treated his servants as if they were his companions, waiting upon them like a menial, and scarcely letting it appear that he was the head of the family. He considered his house as only lent to him, and endeavoured to pay the hire of it to Jesus Christ, by the service he rendered to the poor for his sake.*

Another letter of Paulinus, written long afterwards, describes the happy household of Sulpicius, made so by the constant amiability of their master; happy in every thing except the consciousness that the head of the family, who treated them more like his nearest relatives than his dependents, was himself tormented by a perpetual distrust of his own spiritual condition. 'Your domestics tell me that your heart burns with charity; that your spirit is enlightened with heavenly knowledge; that you are humble in the midst of grandeur, and poor in the midst of wealth, and that you live in a state of self-imposed bondage; that you benignantly treat your servants as your companions, and your brethren as your masters.'† Paulinus concludes his eulogium, by comparing Sulpicius to St. Martin: 'Elevated to the highest degree of virtue, they assure me, that you

* Epist. II. Paulini ad Sulp. Sever.

† Epist. XIV. Paul. ad Sulp. Sever.

ire a perfect servant of God: the enemy of riches, A.D. 390—394.
he living portrait of the *holy Martin*, and of the holy Clarus; and an entirely obedient follower of the gospel.'

Its effects on the mind of Vigilantius.

Such was Sulpicius Severus, the early friend and religious instructor of Vigilantius, and in him the young mountaineer witnessed that spiritual wavering, and unsettled character, that mixture of piety with fanaticism, and of kind-heartedness with austerity, which produced in his own mind a spirit of inquiry, and must have forced such reflections as these upon him—'Can that system be right, which perverts the understanding, inflames the imagination, and tortures the body and mind of such a man, as this generous master of mine? The dignified senator is urged to abandon his post of duty: the influential noble, whose pure and blameless life, in the midst of corrupt society, might preach Christianity with persuasive eloquence, and make converts every day, is told to shut himself up in a cell, and to hide his light under a bushel. The professed follower of Him, who promised refreshment and rest unto those, who should adopt his religion, is directed by his ghostly adviser to place some new yoke upon his neck, heavy to carry, and hard to bear.'

The more Vigilantius loved and reverenced Sulpicius, the more dissatisfied would he be, with the system, which never allowed a really pious man to be at rest in his conscience, but filled him with doubts and misgivings, as to the safety of his soul, so long as he indulged in the most innocent

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earthly enjoyments, and reserved any thing to be called his own out of his princely patrimony.

'My father,' he might have said to him after having endeavoured to soothe his troubled mind, 'You are filled with remorse because you have not obeyed Martin more submissively, nor followed more closely in the footsteps of Paulinus.* You complain that you have not sold your lands to give to the poor; but do you not spend all your substance in hospitality and charity? See what Paulinus himself has written to reconcile you to yourself. It requires a greater effort of virtue to retain possession of wealth, without fixing our affections upon it, than to resign it altogether; it is more noble and generous to have it, and to despise it, than to renounce it, for fear of misusing it.' †

Visit to Martin of Tours.

During the time that Vigilantius was in the service of Sulpicius, it is probable that he accompanied him on one of those frequent visits, which the historian paid to St. Martin; and which were so fatal not only to his reputation, as a man of sound understanding, but also to his peace of mind. Martin was then living in the monastery,

* 'Sermo autem illius non alius apud nos fuit, quam mundi hujus illicebras, et sæculi onera relinquenda, ut dominum Jesum liberi expeditique sequeremur: præstantissimumque nobis præsentium temporum illustris viri Paulini, cujus suprà mentionem fecimus, exemplum ingerebat, qui summis opibus abjectis, Christum secutus, solus pæne his temporibus Evangelica præcepta complêsset."—Sul. Sev. Vita Martini, c. 26.

† 'Nos autem non patiamur invidiam perfectionis, sed potiùs accipiamus veniam infirmitatis; quia negare non potes, fortius esse manentibus, quàm alienatis rebus carere; et spernere quod habeas, quàm non habere quod spernas.'—Epist. Paul. ad Sulp. Sev. II.

ounded by him at Marmoutier (Majus Monasteri- A. D. 390—394.
im) near Tours; and in order to make the reader
etter acquainted with the modes of thought and
ction, which characterized the age, we will
uppose that Vigilantius had an opportunity of be-
oming a spectator with Sulpicius of some of those
cenes, which ecclesiastical writers have gravely
lescribed in honour of St. Martin. Being careful
not to introduce a single incident, but such as is
recorded in the contemporary authorities of the
fourth and fifth centuries, I will take no greater
liberty with my subject, than to make Vigilantius
the eye-witness of transactions, which were really
performed to the very letter, as I am about to re-
present them.

Picture, then, Sulpicius and Vigilantius pursuing their journey from the banks of the Garonne to those of the Loire. The nearer they approached the city of Tours, the more striking were the proofs exhibited of Martin's wonderful influence over the minds of the people. They saw the ruins of heathen temples recently demolished, and were told that the work of destruction had been done at the command of the bishop. They beheld preparations for building shrines and churches, and were assured that it was enough for Martin to give the word, and the sacred walls began to rise. The prefects and authorities of the country were kept in awe by the dread of incurring the displeasure of a saint, whose word they believed could paralyse their limbs, fasten them to the seats on which they were sitting, or to the ground on which they

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were standing; and the peasants and citizens declared that they dwelt in security both as to life and property, now that the very name of Martin controlled their oppressors. They saw groups of people accompanying sick and infirm patients, who were being conveyed in litters and carts, and they were informed * that they were on their way to the holy man of Tours, whose prayers would procure their restoration to health. 'If we can receive his blessing,' said they, 'we shall be made whole—or if we can only get within reach of his shadow, or the touch of his garment, virtue will proceed from it; but if this be denied us, we will kiss the ground on which he has sat, or the path over which he has walked, and our faith in his miraculous powers will be rewarded with healing.' They were accosted by peasants, who pointed to their sheep, or cattle, and said, 'We have to thank the holy Martin for driving the rot from our flocks, and the murrain from our herds.' 'That cow,' said one, 'went mad, it was not safe to go near her, she ran wildly through the fields, and threatened every one with destruction that stood in her way. I implored the saint's help. He came and commanded the animal to stand still. She obeyed him. His search-

Marvellous tales.

* Sulpicius, in his Life of Martin, and in his Dialogues on the virtues of Martin, repeats again and again, that every thing he relates, was told to him by eye-witnesses.

'Nam cum olim audita fide ejus vita atque virtutibus, desiderio illius æstuaremus, gratam nobis ad eum videndum peregrinationem suscepimus: simul quia jam ardebat animus vitam illius scribere, partim ab ipso, in quantum ille interrogari potuit, sciscitati sumus: partim ab his, qui interfuerant vel sciebant, cognovimus.'—De Vita Mart. c. 26.

ing eye, which nothing can escape, discerned a devil sitting upon her back : ' Depart from her, thou evil one,' he exclaimed, ' and cease to torment the harmless beast.' The spirit of darkness obeyed, and left her. ' And wonderful to say,' added the peasant, ' my cow, when she found herself released from her tormentor, came and lay down humbly at the feet of Martin, who dismissed her quietly, and now she is as gentle as any of the rest of the herd.' * A. D. 390—394.

Another man, the owner of a chariot and four horses, told them, that as he was driving some soldiers to the next station, the beasts stopped short at the sight of Martin, who was clothed in hair-cloth, and whose dark and flowing cloak frightened them. They would not stir from the spot, and the soldiers in their wrath at being thus delayed, attacked the holy man, and beat him most cruelly. But the horses were still immoveable ; neither whips, nor goads, nor clubs, which were plied unmercifully to urge them on, were of any avail. They continued fixed to the ground until the soldiers implored Martin's forgiveness on their knees, and at his voice, they were permitted to proceed.' †

A still more marvellous exhibition of the saint's supernatural power was communicated to them. The emperor Valentinian, in his pride, and at the instigation of his wife, an Arian, refused to receive the bishop of Tours. The saint had recourse to

* Dial. II. c. 9. † Ibid. Chap. 4.

A. D. 390—394. his sack-cloth and ashes; he abstained from food; not a drop of water did he permit to moisten his lips; he passed nights and days in prayer, and for a week he persevered in these exercises of devotion. On the seventh day an angel appeared to him, and assured him that he might now present himself before the emperor without the fear of being excluded from his presence. The saint went to the palace. The barred gates and closed doors opened as he approached: the guards had not the power to impede his progress, and the indignant monarch saw the object of his resentment draw nigh to him, without an attempt being made by his attendants to stop him. Valentinian, in sullen pride, remained upon his royal seat, and would not rise to welcome his visitor; suddenly a flame rose from under his chair, and the scorched tyrant was taught to shew better manners, and to respect a holy man like Martin. He jumped from his throne in agony, and stood up before the saint of God.*

They learnt from another informant that there was a shrine in the neighbourhood of the monastery, which was said to be erected over the remains of a Christian martyr. The saint had reason to doubt the fact, and going to the tomb, he prayed that the Lord would enlighten him as to the merits of the person who lay buried there. While he was at his devotions he beheld a hideous apparition, which he conjured to inform him over whose body the altar was raised. The phantom

* Ibid. Chap. 6.

told him, that his own relics were inhumed there, and that he had been a robber, and executed on that spot for his crimes.* A. D. 390—394.

Within a short distance of the monastery, Sulpicius and his companion were cautioned by one of Martin's monks to be extremely circumspect in their conduct, and not to violate the sanctity of the place by any act of impropriety. 'The very walls have ears and eyes, and there is not an act,' said he, 'with which the saint is not acquainted. It was my misfortune to offend, and now I put you on your guard: I was sitting by Martin's chafing-dish, and inadvertently suffered my dress to be deranged, and to expose what ought to have been covered. Secret powers of perception enabled Martin to understand what was done, and although he was at some distance, and could not see it, yet he exclaimed with a loud voice, "Who is desecrating my habitation!"†

The celebrated monastery of St. Martin, called Majus Monasterium, by way of distinction, and which by corruption has since given the name of Marmoutier to the small town which now stands upon its site, was on the northern or right bank of the river Loire. The travellers had therefore to pass through the city of Tours, and its suburbs, before they could arrive at it. Tours is built very near the point of junction where the Cher falls into the Loire, and then, as now, presented the most delightful scenery to the eye. But the The Monastery of Marmoutier.

* De Vitâ Mart. c. 8. † Dial. III. 19.

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beauties of nature, and the attractions of busy life, had no charms for Martin; and shortly after his elevation to the episcopate, he fixed upon this as the most retired spot he could find, near the principal church of his diocese, and here the prelate resumed the habit and the severe discipline of an anchorite. The travellers, after walking about two miles from the city towards the east, in the direction of the river, found themselves approaching a spot so wild, so rocky, and entangled with trees and underwood, that they could scarcely believe that they were still in the immediate neighbourhood of a populous town. They might have expected every moment to see a vast range of buildings rise before them, capable of receiving the eighty monks whom Martin had gathered about him; but instead of this they advanced onwards without hearing any sound, or seeing any object which indicated the vicinity of so large a fraternity. At length, upon turning a corner of a lofty range of rocks, which hemmed in the river so closely, that there was scarcely a passage left for their feet, a small plain opened before them, which looked like an amphitheatre, walled in by a mountain, and separated from a forest by the waters of the Loire.*

In this solitude, which no voice disturbed, Sulpicius pointed out a hut to his companion, built of nothing but logs, rudely joined together, as the habitation of the holy Bishop of Tours. As if they

* Sulp. de vitâ Mart. c. 7.

were on sacred ground, they approached the saint's dwelling-place softly and reverently, and when they arrived at the door, they paused before they presumed to knock, or to ask permission to enter. No answer was returned to their first application for admittance, and Sulpicius whispered to his attendant that Martin was at his devotions, and must not be interrupted. He then beckoned him away from the saint's cabin, and drew near to two or three huts of the same construction: but these too were closed, and all was silence within. They next explored the side of the mountain, in the hollow cavities of which many of the monks had made cells for themselves, and here a sight presented itself which filled them with the most profound awe. Wherever their eyes could penetrate into the recesses of those caverns, they beheld the inmates in the attitude of prayer. One was prostrate before a cross, another was on his knees, and another was standing with his arms folded, and pressing a relic to his heart. A. D. 390—394.

One of these hermits was seen in the most painful and difficult position which the human frame could assume; his body was supported on his left knee; the right leg was stretched out so as to balance rather than help to sustain the weight of his body. His eyes were fixed on the holy symbol of his religion, his left hand rested on a scull placed upon a small table, and with his right hand he kept striking his naked breast with a flint stone, which lacerated the flesh, while every blow was followed by a gush of blood, and his lips seemed to be repeating the

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well-known words, 'mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.' Suddenly a strong and melodious voice was heard from the other side of the rocks, which began to chant the first verse of the 141st Psalm,—"Lord, I call upon thee, haste thee unto me, and consider my voice when I cry unto thee:" a second voice near them repeated, "Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense, and the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice." The third verse was sung in chorus from the same quarter from whence the first was heard, and in this way the antiphony proceeded from side to side: the whole fraternity apparently joining the sacred psalmody in their turn, until the psalm with the 'gloria patri' was concluded. Not a monk was seen: the sounds were heard pouring forth in perfect harmony from the huts and cells all round. The rocks and woods re-echoed the deep notes, and never was that alternate or choral singing, which Ignatius is said first to have introduced into the services of the Christian Church, performed with more devotional reverence.

When all was again silent, the two friends returned to the hut of Martin; still the door was closed, and no answer was given to their signal for admittance, but the saint was heard speaking, as if he was in conversation. Presently voices, apparently of women, issued indistinctly from the cell, and Sulpicius betrayed signs of amazement and terror, which were felt also by his companion.* He trem-

Pious frauds or hallucinations.

* Dial. II. c. 14.

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oled from head to foot, large drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead, and he continued in a state of silent horror, when he was asked for the cause of his agitation. At length the voices ceased, and Martin, clothed in hair-cloth next his skin, with a threadbare garment of coarse texture and stained with dirt,* hanging loosely about him, came out of the hut, and invited his visitors to enter. His face and head were sprinkled with ashes; what remained of his grey hair was cut close to the skin: his person was emaciated, and he looked more like a corpse risen from a sepulchre than a living man. But his manner was calm and dignified, and his reception of Sulpicius showed more of kindness and human affection, than might have been expected from such a recluse. After the first salutations were over, Martin brought water, and prepared to wash the travellers' feet with his own hands. In vain they would have prevented him: the saint persisted in performing this act of humility, and they acquiesced more out of awe than free consent.†

Not a living being besides themselves appeared within the cell, and it was some time before Sulpicius could muster resolution to ask the saint with whom he had been holding discourse. At first Martin declined to make any reply, but after

* 'The garments of the monks were never changed or washed, but were worn until they dropped to pieces.'—Hieron. in vitâ Hilar.

† 'Ad vesperum autem ipse nobis pedes abluit. Ita auctoritate illius oppressus sum, ut nefas putarem si non acquievissem.'—Sulp. de vitâ Mart. c. 26.

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some importunity on the part of his interrogator, he consented to satisfy his curiosity, on condition that the secret should not be disclosed to others. 'I will tell you then,' said the holy man, 'Agnes and Thecla and Mary * have been with me.' He then described their countenances and the appearance of their raiment. He added that the apostles Peter and Paul † often favoured him with their presence, and that angels of light descended from heaven to converse with him; and that the powers of darkness assailed him more virulently after these interviews with the glorified of the Lord. 'Hark they are coming! but be not ye alarmed, I will put them to flight. I will rebuke them, and send them back to their accursed abodes. Belial,‡ away! I fear thee not, foul fiend, depart from me! Moloch, fire-demon, return to thine own place,—thy burning breath, and the flames that issue from thy mouth, cannot scorch me! Lucifer, thou art fallen, and I will not be carried with thee to the bottomless pit. Away, prince of this world! I am not Balaam, think not that you are to contend for my body,—I am not thy prey.' Martin's horrified visitors were half dead with terror, while the saint continued to accost and defy one demon

* 'Dicam inquit vobis, sed vos quæso nulli dicatis: Agnes, Thecla et Maria mecum fuerunt.'—Sulp. Dial. II. c. 14. For an account of these three, especially Thecla, see Nat. Alex. IX, p. 726, and Baronius 362, 55; 369, 63; 372, 62.

† 'Petrum etiam et Paulum Apostolos videri a se sæpius non negavit.'—Ibid.

‡ 'Jam vero dæmones prout ad eum quisque venisset, suis nominibus increpabat.'—Sulp. Dial. II. c. 14.

after another by name, as if they were really assailing him, and his action corresponded with his words. His countenance expressed anger and disdain. Sometimes he rushed towards the door, as if he were driving the adversary before him, and then he would stand erect, and wave his hand with a commanding air, as if that movement only was sufficient to rid him of the intruder. This extraordinary scene continued for some time. It then seemed as if he was exposed to the attack of a new enemy, and that the heathen gods * were joining in the conflict. 'Mercury!' exclaimed the saint, 'thinkest thou, that I do not know thee under that shape? Thy Proteus form is too familiar to me to be mistaken. Licentious messenger of uncleanness, thou art the most persevering of my foes: but away with thee! I am proof against thy malice. And thou too, once mighty Jove, thinkest thou that thy frowns have any terrors for Martin? Thy reign is over, thy forked lightnings cannot reach me; thy thunderbolts fall harmless at my feet; away to Pandemonium!'† A. D. 390—394.

It was not long before Martin recovered his composure, and proposed to his guests to have recourse to prayer. They did so, but they were too much disquieted, to feel anything like calmness;

* Mercurium maxime patiebatur infestum. Jovem brutum atque ebetem esse dicebat.'—Ibid.

† 'If the name of Gallus be substituted for that of Vigilantius, this scene is substantially described by Sulpicius, who protests again and again, that incredible as his narrative may appear, every word of it was true, and that Martin declared he was visited by celestial, and assailed by evil spirits.'—Dial. II. c. 14.

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and after a frugal repast, for which they had no appetite, they retired to the cell allotted to them. Here they passed the night, not in quiet and refreshing sleep, but harassed with dreams, and waking visions, in which they were haunted by the image of Martin, contending with the fiends and false gods, who, according to his disordered imagination, had been arrayed against him. The next day Sulpicius and Vigilantius made acquaintance with some of the monks, who had retired to this place, for the purposes of penitence and devotion. Many of them were men of noble birth, who had abandoned affluence and comfort, to put themselves under the guidance of the Bishop of Tours, and to submit implicitly to his rules. They had all things in common, and lived after the manner of a large family, which had no will, no wish, no interest, but that which was entirely consistent with the most reverential affection for its head. These Cenobites were divided into eight companies of ten each,* over whom one presided: for obedience and subjection were the great principles which bound them together. Until certain hours they remained alone, each shut up in his own cell, and none moved out except the chief of each class. At prescribed times they met together. Prayers were offered up, psalms were sung, and scripture was read. When they took their meals, by decades at the same table, not a word was spoken. Their food consisted of bread,

Cenobitical and monastic life in fourth century.

* See Hieron. Epist. 18, ad Eustochium.

vegetables and olives; salt was their only seasoning. After they retired to their solitary chambers or caverns for the night, the priors of each class went their rounds, and made their observations. They listened and inspected, and if the monks performed their devotions carelessly or unfrequently, they were reported to Martin, who gently exhorted and rebuked them. Everything in the shape of recreation seemed to be banished from this society of ascetics; but they kept up a perpetual state of excitement by vying with each other, who should fast the longest,—who should continue the most perseveringly in a painful posture of supplication,—who should devise a more uncomfortable and new texture of hair-cloth to irritate his skin,—who should relate the most extravagant visions, and who should come nearest to Martin in preternatural performances and pretensions. As they seldom departed from the precincts of the monastery, it is difficult to ascertain what good they did, each in his individual capacity, to the neighbourhood, which was said to be sanctified by their presence; and yet this was the fraternity, from which almost every city in Gaul was anxious, says the biographer of Martin, to have a bishop.* Some of the brethren, it is true, were occasionally employed in transcribing from the holy volume, but these were the younger ones; the elder members gave themselves up to prayer: †

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* Sulp. Sev. de vitâ Mart. c. 7. † Ibid.

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and, if preaching and the instruction* of the ignorant, or the missionary office, had formed a prominent part of their duties, it is most probable that we should have been more distinctly informed of it.† How much more useful would this company of eighty monks have been in their generation, if they had been followers of a more judicious guide: but their minds were so deeply imbued with the persuasion, that the path to heaven must be that which Martin had traced out, and that only, that having once entered upon it, they could not muster resolution to try any other.

Baneful effects of the Cenobitical system at Marmoutier.

The general effect produced upon the fraternity was "to believe a lie," and to magnify everything into a miracle, until they worked themselves up into a pitch of absolute insanity. If one of them saw a distant object indistinctly in the gloom of the evening, or heard some strange noise amidst the wild roar of the tempest, which swept through the forest, and asked another what it could be, the answer was, "It is an angel of light come to strengthen us in our trials:" or, "It is a spirit of darkness sent to tempt, or to buffet us." The inducement to exaggerate, to tell a tale of wonder, to see visions, and to dream dreams, became more

* 'Martin himself was an *illiterate* man,'—Sul. de vita Mart. c. 26. but yet it is said of him, that no man expounded Sacred Scripture with greater force or perspicuity.'—Ibid.

† 'Tillemont intimates that Martin himself was called the preacher and apostle of Gaul, because he made so many proselytes among the peasants and country people,'—Vol. X. p. 318, but it is singular that he does not strengthen his assertion, by adducing instances of his successful preaching. He cites miracles in abundance.

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and more infectious. The miserable effects of this fanaticism were extravagantly exemplified in a votary named Arborius, who, after visiting the monastery, related of himself, that he had seen Martin ministering at the altar in vestments glittering in gold and jewels, and that he had heard the jingling of the rings and gems, with which his fingers were adorned. What a fancy! Martin, who delighted in rags and filth, transformed into a figure splendidly arrayed!!! *

Another disciple had not sojourned long within the precincts of the monastery, when, to the delight of those who were led captive by similar delusions, he too imagined that strange sights were passing before his eyes. One day, after listening with devout credulity to some of the marvels which were the talk of the place, he exclaimed, "I see a wretched demoniac, who is coming to implore the aid of Martin, struggling to escape from his tormentor. Holy bishop, hasten to his assistance! Look! he is carried by the fiend up into the air. In vain he struggles to release himself. There he is with his head hanging down as if he were suspended from a cloud. But the obscene spirit has not the power to offend us with that which we ought not to see. His vestments are not disordered. His nakedness is not discovered. Oh, Martin, I beseech you to release him. It is Mercury who is thus afflicting him." †

* Vide Dial. III. c. 14.

† 'Vidi quendam, appropiante Martino, in aera raptum.' &c. Sulpicius himself gave this relation, when speaking in the person of

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No wonder that Sulpicius, or any other of the demented disciples of Martin, should be hurried away by the impression of the moment, after witnessing the scene which I have described in the saint's cell; for scarcely a day passed without an incident of the same kind, so completely was Martin at this period of his life under the influence of strong hallucinations. One morning, according to the narrative, Martin was sitting on his three-legged stool in front of his cell, when he declared to those who were with him that he saw two devils on the rock which overhung the monastery, and that he heard them calling out, "Brictio! come hither, Brictio." Presently Brictio made his appearance, and, rushing like a madman at Martin, began to rail at him in the foulest language. His rage was so great that he appeared to be on the point of laying violent hands on the saint. But Martin received all his intemperate language with a calm and placid countenance, and gently brought him to his senses by mild reasoning. 'The two devils were doubtless put to flight,' continues the biographer, 'by Martin, and then Brictio fell at his benefactor's feet, and confessed his error. Martin, upon this, told the demoniac, and the rest of us, that he had seen how he was vexed by the devils.' *

Gallus. Dial. III. 6. Efferor, siquidem creditis, spiritu, et præ dolore totus insanio, non credent Martini virtutibus Christiani, quas dæmones fatebuntur. Dial. III. 6.

* 'Quodam itidem die dum in area quæ parva admodum,' &c. See Dial. III. 20. Can this Brictio be the same as the *Bishop*, whose

A. D 390—

It is lamentable to have to record such aberrations as these, of a man like Martin, and we would gladly search for something in explanation, or in extenuation of such fanaticism. Brictio was one of those half-converted wavering proselytes, who had joined the fraternity at Marmoutier, but whose heart and affections were still with the world, and while he professed to be a Christian, many of his practices were still heathen. Contrary to the humane precepts of the Bishop of Tours, this man was a purchaser of slaves, and encouraged that abominable traffic in human blood, which the Apostle denounced as the sin of man-stealing and kidnapping. On the day before the event just described, Martin had rebuked Brictio for being a slave-trader, and finding him unmoved by remonstrance, he most probably got up this scene to frighten him and others out of such unchristian practices, which he pronounced to be a clear sign of demoniacal possession. Alas! for the weakness and corruption of human nature! Here was a holy man with a work of God to perform, but instead of proceeding with it like a servant of the Lord, he did so rather as a child, or at the least, as a victim of Satan, attempting to put down the deeds of darkness by deceitful devices; in other words, to cast out devils by Beelzebub. The monk and the chafing-dish, Brictio and the incident which I have just now related, show how much Martin rose above his contemporaries in decorum

False e dients f the cor tion of evil.

name figures in the Calendar, 13th. Nov. *Brittius Bishop*, and who, according to Gregory of Tours, succeeded Martin ?

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and benevolence, while he was still far below the Gospel standard of truth and single-mindedness.

Happy would it have been for Martin and his disciples, and for the Christianity of that age, if his faith in the promises of divine aid had been more stedfast; if he had persevered more patiently in commending and carrying out the true principles of the gospel, without having recourse to false expedients for promoting the glory of God, and the extension of Christ's kingdom.

One act of imposture or fanaticism, (I would fain avoid these hard names, but by what other name can it be called,) was followed by another, and the simplest actions were resolved into miracles by the self-deluded recluse and his blinded admirers. One morning they were assembled together near the river side, when a serpent issued from the Loire in the direction where they were standing. 'In the name of the Lord,' said Martin, 'I command thee to depart.' The reptile glided away, and swam over to the opposite bank. What could be more natural, than that terrified by the human voice, it should retire from it; but Martin thought proper to make a miracle of the event. 'Behold,' said he, with a deep sigh, 'serpents listen to me, but men refuse to hear me.'*

Infectious imposture.

Before Sulpicius and his companion returned to Aquitain, an impostor at Marmoutier, named Anatolius, presumed a little too much upon the miraculous character of the place, and over-acted his

* Dial. III. 12.

part. He pretended to enjoy the same intercourse with the ministering spirits of heaven, to which Martin himself laid claim, and spoke of angels being the interlocutors between himself and God. By what artifices he imposed upon his companions, we are not informed; but extraordinary sounds were heard, and brilliant lights were seen in his cell, which staggered incredulity. They began to believe that Anatolius was a highly gifted saint, and when he produced a garment of rare texture, as a robe of purity, which had been presented to him by the Lord himself, the most pious and discerning of the fraternity confessed that they were unable to detect any falsehood. By the advice of Clarus they had recourse to prayer, and as the story goes, when they were about to take Anatolius and the marvellous vestment before Martin, to have it examined, it vanished from their sight.* A. D. 390—394.

Such were the scenes related to Vigilantius by Sulpicius, if not actually witnessed by him; and he could not remain blind to the fact, that his patron was neither happier nor better for his visit to the Bishop of Tours. After his return home, the image of Martin haunted the sensitive historian: he was pursued by the recollection of the ascetic prelate sleeping on the cold earth, with nothing but ashes strewed beneath him, and covered with sackcloth only; refusing a softer bed, or warmer clothing, even in severe illness; declaring that a Christian ought to die on

* Sulp. Sev. de Vitâ Mart. c. 25.

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ashes;* feeding on the most unwholesome food, and denying himself every indulgence; praying in the most irksome posture, forcing sleep from his eyes, and exposing himself to the extremes of heat and cold, hunger and thirst. The imagination of Sulpicius dwelt on what he had seen and heard at Marmoutier, until he believed that heaven would be closed upon him, unless he should practise the same austerities.

How Vigilantius was affected by these things.

Now what was the effect likely to be produced on the mind of a devout young man, who could not shake off his feelings of tenderness for his patron, though he was the daily spectator of his weakness? He would either become the victim of the same delusions, or he would consult the holy volume, which he was taught to regard as his rule of faith, and praying earnestly for guidance from above, he would gradually learn to distinguish between the commandments of God, and the yoke imposed by fanaticism: and the more he loved his benefactor the more he would be inclined to turn with aversion from the corrupt system, which was repugnant to scriptural precepts, and debased the Christianity of an amiable and devout man. Vigilantius could not be blind to the fact, that in the first place Sulpicius had imbibed some extravagant notions as to the necessity of self-infliction, far beyond the duty of abstinence and bodily discipline. The sackcloth and ashes, the exposure to cold, and hunger, and want of

* 'Non decet Christianum nisi in cinere mori.'—Epist. Sulp. Sev. ad Bassulam.

sleep, the sufferings imposed by way of penance, and the rejection of the necessaries of life, which he saw carried to excess, implied a belief that the sacrifice of Christ was not a sufficient satisfaction for the sins of man; that man must therefore inflict some sufferings upon himself to supply the deficiency, to appease the unpropitiated wrath of God, and in a sense unknown to scripture, "to fill up what is behind of the afflictions of Christ." He perceived also in the second place, that Sulpicius, magnifying the merits of such as could inflict the severest sufferings upon themselves, and elevating them in his own mind to a rank far above any human example of holiness and virtue, yielded a blind faith to all they said and commanded. Hence his credulity on the subject of Martin's professed miracles, and his obedience to that bishop's rules of discipline. Because Martin had great powers of endurance, he must therefore be pre-eminently holy: and because he was pre-eminently holy, nothing that he related of his own performances could be considered incredible. Thus Vigilantius saw on one side vain-glorious exaltation, spiritual pride, and pretension to miraculous power; and on the other side, a false humility and prostration of the understanding, both growing out of the same mistaken system of asceticism: a system which undermined the doctrine of Christ's full and sufficient sacrifice, and assigned an undue value to the inflictions and performances of men like Martin of Tours: and which he probably foresaw would in the end elevate them in the minds of weak breth-

A. D. 390—394.

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ren, to mediatorial thrones, and render them little less than objects of divine worship. Consequently we must attribute to impressions first received in the household of Sulpicius, the efforts, which Vigilantius afterwards made, to expose the errors of asceticism, and to check the progress of hagiolatry.

## CHAP. VII.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

In the fourth century, intercourse by letters was not usually carried on by public means of conveyance, as it is now; but epistles were conveyed privately, at such opportunities as the occasional journeys of friends or domestics might offer. The same traveller was frequently the bearer of oral messages, and of written communications to many persons on the whole line of his route; and this gave him admission to houses, and the advantage of an hospitable reception from the beginning to the end of his journey. It was necessarily a confidential trust, and none were likely to be so employed, but those who were in every degree worthy of being admitted to the intimacy of the parties in correspondence. The letter-bearer in most cases was the familiar associate of the individuals from whom he brought the communication, and he filled up in conversation the intelligence which was left untold, or insufficiently

A. D. 394.

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explained in the papers and parchments which he brought with him. It was he who carried political and religious news from place to place, who conveyed little presents and tokens of affection, and who frequently acted as a missionary and messenger of the Gospel, by enlarging upon those sacred topics, which formed the subject of the epistles entrusted to him.

Vigilantius at Nola.

It is in this character that Vigilantius next appears before us, in the year 394. He was sent by Sulpicius with a companion into Campania, to Paulinus of Nola, to whose notice he had most probably been introduced at Eluso or Ebromagus, before that excellent man retired from the world. The manner in which Paulinus speaks of him in a letter addressed to Sulpicius, after his arrival at Nola, indicates longer acquaintance and greater esteem than could have arisen out of a first introduction. From the beginning to the end of that epistle, there is a strain of tenderness, and of holy affection, which plainly marks the degree of friendship existing between Vigilantius and the two correspondents, and the high estimation in which he was held by both, at this period of his life.

'You have thought it necessary,' thus wrote Paulinus to Sulpicius,* 'to make an excuse, dearest brother, for not coming to me according to *your*

* 'Epistola Paulini ad Sulpicium Severum. Bib. Patr. 5. Pars I. p. 142. Edit. Col. 1618. Opera. Paulini, p. 1, Editio Antwerpiæ, 1622. In the French Lettres de Paulin, Paris, 1703, this Epistle is numbered 5, p. 55.

engagement, and *my* expectation. But it is the inferior part of you, your body only, which remains at home, while you yourself are present with me in will, in spirit, and in discourse; and indeed you cannot be said to be entirely absent from me even bodily, since those two corporeal members of yours, are with me in the persons of your two domestics,* who are united to you by holy service in the Lord.' A.D. 394.

After many pious reflections, and having described his own sickness and convalescence, which corresponded in point of time with the illness and recovery of Sulpicius, and which he professed to regard as a proof of their community in the Gospel, (in reference to 1 Cor. xii. 25—27.) Paulinus proceeds thus :

'But this is not the only cause which has detained our young men † here, for our Vigilantius has been labouring under a fever in Campania, both before he arrived at my house, and since ; and he has thus sympathized in my illness by fellow-suffering, like one who is a member of my body.‡

* 'Pueris tuis.' Παῖδες and *pueri*, were terms used to express not only the servants, but the confidential attendants and friends of a household. In the 9th Epist. of Paulinus, '*Frater Victor*,' is spoken of with every term of endearment, after having been called 'puer,' and 'contubernium.'

† 'Pueros nostros.'

‡ 'Quia et ipse sociale membrum erat, *socio* labore compassus est.' —Bib. Patr. Edit. Col. 1618, p. 143. '—— labore compassus est.'— Op. Paul. Ed. Ant. 1622, p. 9. 'Comme lesprit du Christianisme nous fait etre les membres d'une même corps.—French tran : Lettres de Paul, p. 66. The French translators suppress the term of endearment, *noster*, before the name of Vigilantius.

A. D. 394. His companion has felt none of my malady, but has been perfectly well, and free from my infirmities, because the flesh which does not belong to me, could not participate in the afflictions of joints not its own. When our Vigilantius began to be well enough to travel, then I thought of replying to your letter. I confess however that both would willingly have been on their journey long ago: but since the one would have been rash to hasten his departure before he was convalescent, and the other, who was well, would have been unkind to set out before his companion had recovered, I quietly detained them both, against their wishes, by delaying to write to you, when I found that remonstrances were unavailing.' *

Vigilantius highly esteemed by Paulinus.

This passage in attestation of the piety of Vigilantius, and of the affectionate esteem in which he was held by Paulinus, is the more remarkable, because the very terms, and modes of expression, which the writer had used, in speaking of *community of suffering*, to describe his intimacy with Sulpicius, the brother of his heart and soul, are repeated to denote the ties which bound him to Vigilantius.† In two subsequent clauses of the same epistle, the two messengers are called 'Your domestics, our fellow-servants:' (in the

* The text of the Bibli. Patr. is punctuated very incorrectly: 'sed cum ante virium receptionem *temere festinaret, qui non poterat impio qui valebat*, ambos, quia non poteramus volentes consilio, retinuimus invitos silentio.'—p. 143. The Antwerp Edition, Paul. Oper. reads thus, '*temerè festinaret, qui non poterat: impiè qui valebat.*'—p. 9.

† *Compati* sibi unius corporis membra. Ibid. p. 8.

French translation, 'nos compagnons au service de dieu,' p. 69.) and 'the young men our sons.' * A. D. 394.

In one of these it is plainly seen, that a confidential communication, relating to his treatment by the pontiff of Rome, which Paulinus was unwilling to commit to paper, was entrusted to these faithful and valued attendants,† to be transmitted by word of mouth.

During this visit to Nola, when illness protracted his abode under the roof of Paulinus, Vigilantius could not fail to observe how the mind and temper, and whole conduct of his host were affected by the dregs of heathen superstition, mixed up with ingredients compounded by such physicians of the soul as Martin and Jerome.

Mode of Life at Nola.

Paulinus had but lately fixed his residence at Nola, and was now having recourse, in a more marked degree than before, to those beguiling practices, which afterwards became the characteristics of the Latin Church; and proved so fatal in the end to the simplicity of the Gospel. Religious observances, transferred from Pagan altars to Christian shrines, were dignified with the name of honours due to the memory of a departed saint: and as the heroes of old were invoked by the ancestors of Paulinus, so did he himself substitute

* 'Conservi nostri pueri tui.' 'Conserva in domino' is the expression he applies to his wife at the end of this epistle.

† Our young men will give you full information on this subject.

'Sed plenius indicare poterunt conservi nostri pueri tui, quantum nobis gratiæ dominicæ detrimentum faciat Urbici Papæ superba discretio.'—Bib. Patr. IV. 144. Oper. Paul. 10.

the name of Felix for that of Hercules or Quirinus, and implore the aid of a dead martyr, when no other name in prayer ought to have been upon his lips, than that of the *one* Mediator between God and man.

No man of ordinary piety, or of the common standard of human virtue, could have succeeded, so rapidly as Paulinus did, in spreading evil, under the name of good. It was his reputation for pre-eminent sanctity which blinded the eyes of weak brethren to the consequences of a debasing system; and had any other man, of less renown than himself, attempted to set up altars to the memory of deceased monks, and to pay divine honours in Christian sanctuaries to images and pictures, he would have been pronounced a publican and a heathen. But this 'flower of his age' cast a spell over the minds and understandings of many of his contemporaries, more by the power of his amiability than of his genius. It is therefore certain that Vigilantius heard and saw everything that could be advanced in favour of the mythological novelties, which were now being grafted on the Christian Church; but it is probable that he was not convinced of the propriety of such proceedings, and that he was treasuring up practical arguments against them. They were the subjects of the letter, which he carried back to Sulpicius, and must also have been topics of conversation. Saint-worship especially must have been an observance, which Vigilantius heard frequently discussed at Nola; for the renewal of personal intercourse, one

of the greatest enjoyments which Paulinus allowed himself to hope for, was to be obtained, as he expressed it, by the intercession of St. Felix. 'Shall I not have the pleasure of accompanying you to the shrine of my household saint, and shall we not thank God that we have been restored to each other by the interposition of St. Felix?' * A. D. 394.

That mind must have been one of no common strength, which could resist the fascinations of the discourse and example of a holy recluse, who was consulted as the Christian oracle of Italy, and who was, at the very period of this visit, employing his wealth and his influence to promote these observances, which Vigilantius afterwards denounced.†

The simple mountaineer saw splendid shrines rising in honour of a man, who had lived 150 years before, and of whom but little could be known with any accuracy. He beheld preparations made for a series of rites, and a course of daily worship, which take the fastest hold upon the imagination. He witnessed the ardour shown by an ordained minister of Christ, to promote the homage of dead men's bones, to encourage prostration before pic- The principles of Vigilantius in danger.

* 'In gremio jam communis patroni Dominædii mei Felicis excipiam, et quod nunc ipsius orationibus impetrari rogo.' &c.—Epist. Paul. I. ad Sulp.

† Pagi uses a very strong term in condemnation of the opposition offered by Vigilantius to the superstitions of his age.—'Cum Vigilantius in Sanctorum Martyrum reliquias et Sacerdotum castitatem debacchari cæpisset,—Vol. II. p. 73. It was not against relics, or chastity, but the abuse of them, that Vigilantius protested in after-life.

A. D. 394. tures and statues, to invoke the dead and restore ceremonies, which are called idolatrous in the holy page of the book of life. The person, who sanctioned these things, and to whom writers, calling themselves Christians, have imputed the honour of being the foremost in promoting this falsely called '*Christian philosophy*,' * was held in such high estimation, that the supreme pontiff of Rome himself could not keep the tide of honour, which poured upon him, within due bounds: for even when the Pope frowned upon him for some of his irregular proceedings, public opinion loudly testified its admiration, and the portals of Paulinus were crowded by persons of the first eminence who came to Nola, at the very time that Vigilantius was there, to pay him their best tributes of respect. 'They (the two young men) have seen,' said Paulinus, in his epistle to Sulpicius, speaking of the rebuke which he had received from Pope Siricius† for suffering himself to be uncanonically ordained at Barcelona,—'they have seen how the grace of God has made the prejudice of the Pope work for my honour; they have seen within the short interval of a few days, how I have been visited by monks, clergy, and bishops, and even by laymen of the highest rank. There is scarcely a bishop of Campania who has not testified his respect for me in person or by letter; and prelates

* See Baronius, Ann. 4, p. 771.

† '*Urbicus*' is the erroneous reading in the Antwerp Edition of Paulinus' Works.

from Africa have deputed representatives to express their veneration.' * A. D. 391.

Of all this public homage, rendered to one of the most celebrated fathers of Christian idolatry, Vigilantius was witness. He loved the man, he heard him discourse, as sophists and fanatics can discourse, in honied accents, of the lawfulness of mixing up heathen rites with Christian observances, and yet his mind remained unpolluted.

Holy Scripture was his safeguard.

Under the divine grace and the especial providence which guard those servants of God from evil, who are reserved to be the instruments of correcting and reforming his church, I attribute the escape of Vigilantius from the peculiar perils of his situation, to the scriptural lessons, which he learnt of the very man, whose religious errors were so dangerous to him. The bane and antidote were both before him; but more of this hereafter.

Description of the Monastery at Nola.

During the greater part of the time that Vigilantius was at Nola, Paulinus was suffering under severe illness, brought on by the rigid abstinence which he had imposed upon himself, and by the excitement and feverish delight he experienced at reaching the spot, where he had so long desired to establish himself. The place and its associates would not admit of anything like mental repose. It was not retirement; for his habitation was near the town, which was thronged at certain seasons by pilgrims and others, who came to worship at

* Epist. Paul. ad Sulp. I. p. 10, 11. Ed. Ant.

A. D. 394.

the shrine of Felix, or to listen to the marvellous tales, which were told of the conversions, cures, and other signs and wonders wrought by his intervention.

History of St. Felix.

According to the legend, St. Felix was a Syrian by birth, who having passed over into Italy, retired to Nola in order to receive religious instruction from Maximus, bishop of that place. There he lived with so much sanctity, that after having worthily fulfilled the duties of the inferior orders which he had received, he was ordained priest of that church. During the cruel persecution under the Emperor Decius, St. Felix employed his zeal in encouraging the Christians of the diocese of Nola to remain stedfast in the faith. He was taken by the infidels and thrown into an obscure prison, but an angel, it was said, opened the gates and set him free. He then concealed himself for some time in his house, that he might assist the faithful, and exhort them to support with constancy the violence of the persecution. The satellites of the emperor having learnt the place of his retreat, went to seize him, but he retired into a cavern of which the entrance was immediately covered with cobwebs, which made them suppose he was not there. The persecution being ended, and Maximus dead, it was proposed to appoint Felix in his stead, but he took care to have another elected, and continued to live in the odour of such reputed sanctity that, both during his life and after his decease, God was believed to have performed many miracles through his intercession. The

hurch celebrated his fete on the 14th of anuary.* A. D. 394.

The villa of Paulinus was within less than a nile of Nola, and stood close to the church and omb of St. Felix. It was fitted up to serve both is a monastery, for those who lived constantly vith him, and as a house of reception for eminent trangers who resorted thither to do honour to im, and homage to his *Dominædius*. Very lifferent was its present appearance from that of he Roman palace, the ancient seat of his ances- ors, wherein baths and banquetting halls, and pacious rooms for theatrical entertainments occu- pied the two stories, which were now converted nto small cells and dormitories. One side of the building was set apart for his brother monks, and the other for the accommodation of his visitors, the *worldly-minded people*, as he called all those who did not adopt his own mode of living. Villa of Paulinus.

Tugurium, or cottage, was the name he gave to the transformed villa. The ample pleasure-ground had also undergone an entire change; the foun- tains and statues had disappeared; the flowers, which emitted sweet odours, and shone in brilliant colours, were thought too luxurious for the senses of persons devoted to religion: an orchard, and a cabbage-garden were all that were reserved to regale a fraternity of *the elect of God*.†

* The above is a close translation of the account given of St. Felix by the French translators of the Letters of Paulinus.—p. 78.

† Such was the term used by Paulinus, ' fraternitatem electorum Dei.'—Epis. Paul. ad Sulp. Sev. I.

A. D. 394.

Discipline at Nola.

Everything in this holy retreat was conducted according to rule, for in fact the house of Paulinus was, as he styled it, a monastery, and his companions were a society of monks, who submitted to strict regulations. They did not indeed practise all the rigid austerities of the cenobites who lived with Martin of Tours, but still it was a severe discipline under which they were governed. They rose at an appointed hour, and celebrated the office of matins at daybreak: at stated times they had daily services in the church, and every evening, vespers were performed with punctual regularity. At midnight there was also a call to prayer, which was obeyed by all who were in health. Paulinus would seldom allow himself to be so unwell as to be absent from the scene of nocturnal devotion.

Every apartment in the house was within hearing of the sacred music performed in the church, and when the psalms were being chanted by a choir, composed of boys and virgins, the host insisted upon all his guests observing the strictest silence during that service. If they declined being present, they were expected to observe religious decorum, while the praises of God were ascending to heaven.

The piety of Paulinus was not satisfied with the church of Nola, as he found it when he first arrived there; and while Vigilantius was staying with him, he began to build a new edifice of more spacious dimensions, and with splendid

decorations. The walls and pavement were of marble.* A.D. 394.

The roof of the principal dome was worked in mosaic, and was intended to represent the Holy Trinity and the Gospel dispensation. The Father was denoted by words proceeding from a cloud; the Son by a Lamb, and the Holy Ghost by a Dove. There was also a cross issuing out of a halo of light, and around it were twelve doves symbolizing the twelve apostles. A rock, from which four streams gushed out, represented Jesus Christ and the four evangelists. All these objects were further explained by verses inscribed on the cupola.† Under the cupola was the high altar, enshrining the ashes of some of the apostles, relics of the martyrs, and a small piece of wood, said to be a chip of the true cross. The nave of the church was lofty and wide, and had two aisles supported by two rows of columns.‡ Attached to each aisle were four chapels, which served for private prayer and meditation, or for burial-places for persons of eminent sanctity. Near the altar there were two sacristies; that on the right hand was provided with books for those who wished to study and to read the scriptures; that on the left was set apart for the officiating priests; and here the sacred vestments and vessels, and the eucharistic elements, and every thing necessary for divine service were kept.§ Description of the church at Nola.

Churches, in the time of Paulinus, as they do

* Epist. Paul. XII. ad Sulp. Sev. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. || Ibid.

A. D. 394. now, generally looked towards the east, but Paulinus, instead of following the usual custom, turned the chancel-end towards the tomb of St. Felix. This mausoleum opened into the oratory of St. Felix, by three arcades and three doors, and the new church was made to communicate with the mausoleum by three corresponding arcades and doors; and these all being of trellis work, the people could not only pass, but could see through, from one sanctuary to the other, which had a very agreeable effect. It was some years before the whole of the fabric was finished, but when it was completed, it looked like a little town, surmounted by three cupolas, encompassed with walls, and comprising within its circuit a cathedral and monastic establishment, with every suitable convenience and decoration.*

This description is taken from one of the letters of Paulinus, addressed to Sulpicius Severus,† in which there is an account of another church which he built at Fondi. The motive which induced him to erect this sanctuary is especially worthy of being recorded at the present crisis, when church-building occupies so much attention. 'I will now,' said he, 'describe the church which I have constructed at Fondi, the town where I once had a house, and where I very often resided. It was out of affectionate regard for the inhabitants of the place, and in memory of my patrimonial estate there, that I determined to build them a

* Epist. Paul. XII. ad Sulp. Sev. † Ibid.

new church, because the old one was too small, and in a very ruinous condition. I have composed the following verses for an inscription for the church, as soon as it shall be consecrated; and my principal reason for sending them to you is, because our brother Victor wishes to have a copy of the picture, which I had painted for the Apsis, to convey to you, in case you should desire to have a similar painting for your own church. By the bye, I am not quite sure that I have spelt *Apsis* right. Is it *Ap*sis, or *Ab*sis? for I do not remember that I ever saw the word written.'* A. D. 394.

The verses accompanying this letter described the picture, as representing a cross standing in the midst of a garden of flowers. At the foot of the cross, Christ was painted under the figure of a white lamb. The Holy Ghost hovered above him, in the form of a dove, and the Father appeared from a cloud, crowning the Lamb. In another part of the picture, the eternal Judge was seen sitting on a lofty rock, and before his tribunal were a flock of goats, and a flock of lambs. The good shepherd rejects the goats, and stretches forth his right arm benignantly towards the lambs. †

This picture reminds us of the two-fold action in Raphael's celebrated 'Transfiguration.' Did it suggest to that eminent master the double representation which his Tableau contains? Rosweyd makes mention of an ancient Sarcophagus remaining at Rome in 1591, which contained something

* Epist. XII. ad. Sulp. Sev. p. 154. † Ibid. p. 155.

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very like the configuration described in the verses of Paulinus.

The society at Nola.

Another of the letters of Paulinus, addressed to Sulpicius, enables us to judge what sort of persons were admitted to his especial confidence, and how he took care to rebuke those, who brought with them to Nola the dregs of the world, while they professed to be followers of Christ, and servants of God. Attention to dress, and even to the extremes of cleanliness, were considered worldly dregs at Nola. After speaking with great contempt of a soldier named Marracinus, who had intended to be the bearer of an epistle from Sulpicius, but who was unwilling to lay aside his bracelets and collar, and boots, and other military trappings, Paulinus proceeds to describe the bearing and appearance of those who reached his standard of excellence, and to compare them with the deportment and garb of such as he disliked. 'I love to receive the visits of those who serve God as we do, and whose religious character is visible in their pallid faces, but I have no satisfaction in the company of such as are proud of their embroidered apparel. Give me the society of those who wear hair-cloth shirts; not of those who are arrayed in cloaks and tunics, and girt with sword-belts, but of men clad in sackcloth, and whose loins are girdled with a rope; not of those insolent persons who pride themselves on their well-dressed hair, but of those, who for the sake of holy deformity, wear their hair short and badly cut, whose foreheads are shaven, and who possess no ornament

except the purity of their lives: who live in honourable disregard and neglect of the niceties of life: who hold personal beauty in contempt, and care only for the internal beauty of their souls: who purposely disfigure themselves, and suffer their faces to be haggard, that their hearts may be clean. How can they, to whom our mode of life is the odour of death, blame us, if their lives be equally unsupportable to us. They have a horror of my fasting, and I cannot endure their eating. Certain acquaintances of ours avoid the faint-smelling breath of a monk, when he speaks; and I detest the foul vapours of a Thrason overcharged with wine. If the dryness of our mouths is displeasing to them, the fumes of wine that pour out of theirs is not less disgusting to us. If they are shocked by our abstemiousness, we are not less so by their intemperance. It is not from men who are intoxicated in the morning, that we wish to receive visits; but from those who fast till the evening; not from those who on the morrow feel the effects of the preceding evening's debauch, but from men who have not touched wine during the whole day; not from those whose heads reel under the fumes of wine, but of those on whom pious vigils have inflicted holy wounds, and caused a sober intoxication, and who stagger not from repletion, but from inanition.' * A.D. 394.

It is lamentable to gather from such passages as these, that the saints of the fourth century thought it praiseworthy to fast and abstain from nourishing Austerities.

* Epist. Paul. ad Sulp. VII.

A. D. 394. food until their mouths were dry and parched, their stomachs were enfeebled, and their whole frame was exhausted for want of sustenance. This was not the discipline of the body which the apostle Paul recommended. His practice and advice, (1 Cor. ix.) were so to train and subdue the body, as to make it a vigorous and fit tenement for an active soul. We learn from other epistles, that Paulinus himself not only fasted until the evening during the whole of Lent, but that no one belonging to the fraternity was permitted to eat before evening.

It appears also that it was their frequent practice to abstain from food until sunset. The dishes then served up were composed usually of vegetables and herbs. On sending a loaf of wheat-flour to Sulpicius,* Paulinus remarked, that it would probably be considered a dainty unlike the fare which was consistent with his professed humility. This shews that the bread which he generally used was of a very inferior quality. His table was frugal in the quantity as well as in the quality of the food he took. Speaking of one Cardamas, who had not been used to such sobriety, he remarks, that after he had been some little time at Nola, he was much altered; and accommodating himself to their meagre fare, had become contented with vegetables and a small allowance of wine. 'This,' says he, 'the leanness of his body and the paleness of his face sufficiently attest.' He adds, 'Though Cardamas rarely drinks at our table, and in such small

* Epist. Paul. ad Sulp. I.

quantities that there is scarcely enough to wet his lips, yet he does not now complain of an empty stomach or a dry throat.' * A. D. 394.

In another letter† Paulinus mentions very pleasantly some instructions which Victor, who had been sent to him from Sulpicius, had given him for living with more simplicity and economy. He says his dishes were all calculated to destroy the fancies and delicacies of a senator.‡ This Victor was described as a young man brought up in a frugal kitchen, who thoroughly understood how to dress beans, to make vinegar from beet-root, and such coarse broth as was fit only for hungry monks.

It was mentioned as a great perfection in the culinary character of Victor, that he would not use pepper or any such drug, but that he was an adept in the use of all sorts of savoury herbs: that he was a pitiless enemy to gardens, for the moment he placed his foot in one he carried off with his knife everything he met with; that he never plagued himself about fire-wood, for he took and threw into the fire everything he found about the house, and for that purpose he would make no hesitation in uncovering the roof and tearing up the old planks.§

Whatever objections Vigilantius may have felt, or expressed against the mode of life pursued at Nola, yet he must have conformed with the regulations of the house, in all matters relating to abstemiousness and devout demeanour, or he would not have conciliated the good opinion of his host.

* Epist. XXV. p. 221.
‡ Epist. III. p. 43.
†. Ibid. III. p. 42, 46.
§ Ibid.

## CHAP. VIII.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 394.

The recreations at Nola.

HUMAN life must have something in the way of relaxation and amusement. Vigilantius saw that even the severe piety of Paulinus consented to unbend at certain hours in the day. The conversation of his visitors, and the news they brought with them from the world, which he himself had forsaken, were his principal recreation. All profane subjects were forbidden, but the discourse would necessarily assume an entertaining form occasionally, and holy legends and religious gossip were substituted for the romantic tales, and merry anecdotes which are wont to divert the circles of common society.

The holy man and his monks, with their guests from a distance, would seat themselves in the corridor, which united the two wings of the house; or in the orchard, and would encourage each other to relate the miracles they had witnessed, or heard of. It must be a sacred exploit, a conflict with Satan, or a struggle with one of

his agents, a conversion by supernatural means, a cure wrought after invoking some popular saint, or some wondrous story of the same kind; and the narrators vied with each other who should relate the most extraordinary tale. A. D. 394.

When a traveller came among them, the inmates of the monastery of Nola were ambitious, in honour of their patron saint, to magnify his supposed favour at the throne of grace, and to tell what astonishing things had been performed through the intercessions of Felix. The stranger from Tours would in his turn relate the surprising feats of St. Martin, and so the tale went round; until the party was in a state of religious intoxication, and ready to affirm and believe anything, however extravagant and incredible it might be. I have already produced an example of this contagious fanaticism in the case of Sulpicius, when he fancied he saw a demoniac suspended in the air, after he had been listening to some of Martin's narrations; and now Vigilantius had a second opportunity of observing how a similar delusion affected Paulinus. When people brood perpetually over one train of ideas, they get absorbed and bewildered, and beginning as fanatics, they end as deceivers. They are themselves the first victims of the dreamy life they lead; they impose upon themselves before they impose upon others; and the propagation of the error does not originate in deliberate falsehood, but grows out of a system which had originally some shadow of truth in it. In fact, no successful structure of fraud, not even Marvellous tales.

A. D. 394.

the mythology of Rome and Greece, nor the fables of Hindooism, nor the bold imposture of Mahomet, could have been built up upon the foundation of an unmixed lie; they had something of the form of reality to rest upon, and may be traced up to a corruption of patriarchal traditions.

And so with the legendary frauds, which must be laid to the door of Paulinus and other visionaries of his age, and which have since expanded through centuries, until a selection only from them fills scores of folio volumes, in the unfinished work, called 'Acta Sanctorum,' or 'Acts of the Saints.'

Propagation of falsehoods.

Many of the wonders, which Vigilantius heard related at Nola, may possibly have arisen from nothing worse than the wanderings of a disordered imagination, or the exaggerated statement of some event, which had really happened, and which being unaccountable according to the ordinary nature of things, was imputed to the supernatural interposition of St. Felix. But the eminent men who ought to have controlled such follies, encouraged them; and to the delusions, which the Christian fathers of the fourth century blindly favoured, or failed to discountenance, we owe the long array of 'pious frauds,' so congenial to our corrupt nature, which have since disgraced the Latin and Greek churches. The commemoration of false miracles became part and parcel of the ecclesiastical discipline, which was framed for the edification of Christian converts.

Having furnished a sample of the fables which

had such charms for the associates of Martin at Marmoutier, and of Sulpicius at Primuliac and Alzonne, I will now relate a few of those, which doubtless tended to open the eyes of Vigilantius to the weak points in the character of his host at Nola. Du Pin has pronounced the letter of Paulinus, from which the first of the following legends is taken, to be one of the most interesting in the whole collection. His critique is just. The narrative is given so graphically, and with so much dramatic effect, that I am sorry my limits oblige me to abbreviate it.* A. D. 394.

The legends of Nola.

'A vessel was anchored on the coast of Sardinia, but the violence of a tempest drove her from her moorings, and forced her out to sea. The sailors took to their boat, and made for land, but they were soon all lost. One old man, however, named Victor, was left alone in the ship, and there he remained six days and nights at the mercy of the waves without any food. Tears were his bread, night and day, but he called upon the name of the Lord, and by the help of angels he was enabled to do several things, which, in his ignorance and feebleness, it would otherwise have been impossible for him to achieve; he cut down the mast, he baled out the water, he hoisted and trimmed such sails as could be used; and he beheld a vision of the heavenly host keeping watch, or working for the safety of the ship.

'Nay more, he was comforted with the sight of the Lord, sitting at the helm and steering it:

* Epist. Paul. XXXVI. ad Macarium, p. 317—321.

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sometimes the celestial helmsman* appeared in the person of the Lord, as he is described in the Apocalypse, and sometimes under the form of *St. Felix, the Patron Saint of Paulinus ! ! !*'

This monstrous narrative† closes with an account of the safe arrival of the vessel and of the old man, Victor, in an Italian port, and with a recommendation to trust in the Lord, and his saints.

Another story was more than a thrice-told tale

* Ipse enim dominus nunc suo vultu coruscus, ut in Apocalypsi describitur, et coma fulgidus; nunc confessoris et amici sui, domini mei communis patroni Felicisore venerabilis, in puppi sedebat, sicut nautico usu dicitur ad temones.'—Paul. Epist. ad Macarium, p. 320. Ed. Antw.

† Reginald the monk of Durham, who compiled a collection of marvellous stories about St. Cuthbert, between 1150 and 1180, has recorded one, which seems to have been fabricated out of this pseudo-miracle related by Paulinus.

'Once upon a time, says Reginald, a ship was sailing past the island over a smooth sea. The sailors were letting down their nets from time to time, all were amusing themselves with angling. All was ease and happiness. But suddenly a storm arose, the more appalling because unforeseen; and such was the violence of the billows, that the ship was at one time elevated into the sky upon the top of a wave, and in the next moment was lost in the hollow of a deep abyss, which seemed to penetrate into the bowels of the earth. In the mean time the cold became so intense, as literally to freeze up the limbs of the sailors. The sails had disappeared in the wind, the mast had been carried away, and the planks of the vessel were quitting their places. No one could hold an oar, and the rudder could no longer perform its duty; so that the ship was tossed to and fro like the shell of an egg upon the waves. All hope of life was gone, and the sailors were momentarily expecting death, in profound silence. At last, however, some of the men bethought themselves of St. Cuthbert. Many of them had been bred and born within his territory, and all of them had heard repeatedly of his sanctity and his miracles. To him, therefore, they addressed their voices and their hearts, and beating their sinful breasts, implored his aid in tears, when, behold, the venerable bishop himself, Cuthbert the saint, appeared to them in a bodily form, visible and palpable, and

at Nola. Two mean and ugly cottages stood very near the church of St. Felix, so near as to prove a sad eye-sore to Paulinus, who used all his persuasions ineffectually to induce the proprietors to sell them to him, in order that he might pull them down. In his anxiety to make himself master of his neighbour's possession, Paulinus forgot the history of Ahab and Naboth, or he fancied that the sanctity of his object would extenuate his violation of the tenth commandment. While he was devising means to eject the owner of the cottages, one of the huts caught fire, and the conflagration threatened to burn down the Church, as well as these nuisances. In vain did they attempt to ex-

A. D. 394.

Alleged miracles of Felix.

took his seat at the prow of the vessel as her steersman. He was richly clothed in pontifical robes, and wore a splendid mitre upon his head; and never before had mortal eye witnessed a sight of such grace and beauty. All danger now disappeared. The saint stretched out his pastoral staff over the waves, and the ship glided with the ease of a bird over the boiling and raging billows. The water rose in indignation mountains high by its sides, but still it glided gently on in a straight line, without let or hindrance. Cuthbert now addressed the astonished men, and told them his name, and bid them take heart, and promised to bring them safe to land. Farne was soon in sight, and they saw at a distance the church of Lindisfarne. But the miracle does not end here. Cuthbert, by his mighty power, compelled the ship to make a bound upon the dry land, so that the men were under no necessity of wetting their feet upon the shore. And when he had performed this mighty work, he exclaimed, 'I have done the deed!' and, straightway, vanishing from their eyes, he returned to his mansion of peaceful repose. Bartholomew, a monk of Durham, was then the hermit of the island, and to him the sailors told the miracle, with weeping eyes, and offered up their grateful devotions to their mighty benefactor. John, a grey-haired monk of our church, says Reginald, told me this marvellous tale. He had it from the men themselves, who confirmed it by an oath, and he had heard it repeatedly from Bartholomew.'

A. D. 394. tinguish the flames; all endeavours were to no purpose, until Paulinus took one of his sacred relics, a piece of the true cross, and held it between the raging elements, and the holy edifice. In an instant the fire was extinguished, the church was saved, and the nuisance was no more. The cabin of the more obstinate proprietor of the two was burnt to the ground, and the other, subdued by so great a miracle, gave up his inheritance, and allowed it to be removed. 'Thanks to St. Felix,' said the narrator, 'nothing was burnt, but that which ought to have been burnt.' *

Another miracle which Paulinus loved to relate in honour of St. Felix, was so overlaid with absurdities, that I could scarcely have believed that any man in his senses would have committed himself to such heathenish trash, had not the recluse of Nola made it the subject of one of his poems.

A farmer who was a pious votary of St. Felix, had brought up two bullocks, which were great favourites, and were used to plough his land. One night they were carried off by thieves, and the clown, instead of going in search of them, repaired to the shrine of the saint, and poured out not only his prayers for help, but his complaints and remonstrances. He even accused the saint of letting him sleep too soundly, while the knaves robbed him. Long did he continue to prostrate himself before the the dead man's sepulchre; bitterly did he expostulate, and many were the supplications

* 'Et nihil exustum, nisi quod debebat aduri.'—Paul Natal. X. p. 621.

he poured forth, mixed with threats and promises. In short, a more blasphemous tissue of words was never strung together in the form of prayers, than those which Paulinus put into the mouth of the unfortunate rustic. Among other things, he declared, that he would not leave the church, unless the saint would restore his bullocks to him on the spot; nor did he stir, until he was removed by force. When he was compelled to return home, he renewed his petitions to Felix with clamorous importunity, and his faith was rewarded. Felix himself took the trouble to go after the stolen cattle, rescued them out of the hands of the thieves, and drove them home to their master, who triumphantly exhibited them the next day, before all the people, at the martyr's shrine.* A. D. 394.

We have no means of learning what was the immediate effect produced on Vigilantius, by listening to the ridiculous legends which amused and edified the good folks at Nola; or whether he then expressed any opinions upon the subject, which he afterwards discussed with so much freedom. At all events he gave no displeasure to his host, for he carried away with him many testimonies of esteem and affection, and, as we shall see by-and-bye, he returned to Nola the following year, and again departed in full favour with Paulinus.

What are we to think then of his sentiments and conduct at this time? Had he begun to entertain the objections which he avowed a few

What impression was made on Vigilantius at this time.

* Vide Paulini Nat. VI.

A.D. 394. years afterwards? And if so, was he guilty of unworthy dissimulation in keeping them to himself, and in taking part in religious services, which he secretly condemned? I am inclined to believe, that his doubts and scruples, at this period of his life, were kept under, and perhaps to a certain extent over-ruled, by the profound reverence with which he regarded Sulpicius and Paulinus. It was impossible not to entertain the deepest love and veneration for such men. We feel the spell ourselves, even while we are dwelling on their faults, and tracing the unhappy consequences of their errors. We cannot roughly break the web, which their Christian virtues and inestimable qualities have spun round us. We confess ourselves to be fascinated by their kind-heartedness and self-denial, and zealous devotion to the cause of God. The sweet odour of their real sanctity sheds its soft influence over us. We become confused and drowsy, and dream with them. Visionary examples of holy living and purity, even to perfection, pass dimly before us. We begin to admire them too much. We must rouse ourselves: we must listen to stern reason: we must call revelation to our aid! We must compare the grave and sober miracles of the Bible with the extravagant and ludicrous prodigies, said to have been worked in these days of wonder. We must go to the page of eternal truth, and see what God has forbidden. We must take up the 'old almanac' of history, and see what has been the certain and inevitable result of practices and opinions like

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those of Paulinus and Sulpicius, through the long, long and dark reign of error and superstition—we must turn from their unquestionable virtues, to the no less certain vices of their admirers and followers, who could not attain unto their innocence and piety and devotedness, but sunk into all the slough and filth of the corrupt system, which they were so misguided as to sanction, and to entail as a curse upon the Church of Christ. I have no doubt that Vigilantius was at first infatuated by the lovely parts of their character, and was silenced by their sophistries. But when he began to exercise his judgment, and to come to himself, then their very excellence, which was marred by their mistaken views of Gospel perfectibility, made him detest the system the more; and the recollection of scenes which he had witnessed, and of superstitious rites in which he had joined, caused him to examine more attentively the traditions which sapped the very intellect of his noble friends, and left them in ruin.

When Jerome quarrelled with Vigilantius, and spared no invective, he accused him of ignorance of Scripture, and pretended to laugh at the idea of the innkeeper's son undertaking to explain Holy Writ, and affecting to understand the prophets and apostles better than other people. But Vigilantius had enjoyed the very best opportunities of making himself acquainted with the language and meaning of Scripture. He might sometimes err, like others, in the interpretation of Scriptural passages, but the great work of transla-

The opportunities enjoyed by Vigilantius of acquiring Scriptural knowledge

A. D. 394.

tion, transcription, collation, and circulation of Scripture, in which he was afterwards engaged, as I shall show in the progress of this work, ought to have made Jerome hesitate before he gave way to his severity; and Jerome knew full well that it was impossible to associate with Sulpicius and Paulinus, especially with the latter, as familiarly as Vigilantius had done, without having the attention perpetually drawn to the sacred fountain of our holy religion. The antidote was at hand, while the poisonous infusion was poured into his cup. Vigilantius was studying the word of God, while he was drinking intoxicating draughts from the lips of Paulinus; and I believe it to have been his reverence for the word of revelation, imbibed from the conversation and correspondence of his two patrons, which made him diffident for a long time of his own judgment. He was in the habit of hearing the sacred books quoted by Paulinus on all occasions, and giving that good man credit for faithfully measuring his conduct and opinions by Holy Writ; he did not venture to set up his own opinions, until he had made a more diligent search into the precious volume which he was taught to venerate. When he began to examine for himself, he found that though Paulinus had been fluent in the use of Scripture, he was not deep or critical: no doubt he discovered, that which Du Pin and Tillemont have since noticed, that the writings and conversation of Paulinus, though they were the delight of his time, '*les delices de son temps*,' were more entertaining than instructive; that they were

superficial; did not go into religion as a science, and did not unravel difficult questions. It was to the heart that Paulinus spoke with so much effect, and this it was that won its way to the affections of Vigilantius. A. D. 394.

The Bishop of Nola's interpretations of Scripture were most happy and beautiful, when they were directed to the feelings, to the moral conduct, and to the gentler emotions of the heart; but they failed both in force and fidelity, when they were meant to illustrate the mysteries of doctrine. He wanted spiritual and intellectual discernment to distinguish between holy truths and the opposite errors, which often lie close together.

I am glad to have been led, by this part of my narrative, to make some remarks upon Paulinus as a Textuarian; because it was from his mouth or pen that Vigilantius acquired much of that scriptural wisdom, by which he became a formidable adversary to Jerome. Paulinus excelled in a general knowledge, and ready citation of Scripture, and it is attractive, when we read his epistles, to follow him in the easy and natural flow of his biblical references. His merit will be estimated the more highly in taking this view of his character and attainments, when we call to mind the innumerable difficulties, by which Scripture reading was beset in those days. To us, who have the word of God in *print*, with a great variety of editions at our command, in books of all sizes and types, there can be but a faint idea of the difficulty of studying the bible

The difficulties of studying Scripture at that period compared with the present.

A. D. 394. in manuscript; and (by the help of manuscripts only,) of making one's self sufficiently acquainted with the sacred text, so as to be able to quote many consecutive sentences with fluency and accuracy. The work of reference alone, and of turning to a passage with any degree of readiness, must have been a troublesome task, at a time when it was a rare thing to have all the canonical books in a volume. And even when the entire series was gathered together in one collection, and lay in order before the reader, his hand and his eye were unassisted by the helps and directories which come to our aid. Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome had introduced certain divisions, but they fell very short of those more minute compartments of chapter and verse, which have been universally adopted in modern times. We have the books of the Old and New Testament placed in an order which is familiar to everybody; the sequence in which they follow each other, the columns in which they are ranged, the headings of chapters, the marginal directions, the concordances and the indexes which we possess, afford facilities for consulting and committing the divine oracles to memory, which were unknown to Paulinus, and to Vigilantius. It is our blessing to live in an age and country, where the bible can be purchased so cheaply in all languages, that whether we wish to read it in our own tongue, or to compare a passage with the original, or with any foreign translation, we can obtain copies of the very type which best suits our eye-sight, without any inconvenience. Moreover, there is another advantage which

we enjoy, and which we cannot estimate too highly. We all use the same version, the authorized English version, as it is called; consequently we always hear Scripture quoted in the very same form of words; sentence for sentence, word for word, syllable for syllable. From our very childhood we are familiarized with texts, which never vary in sound; and the ear and the eye at once recognise the inspired truth, "line upon line, and precept upon precept." A. D. 394.

When Paulinus first devoted himself to the study of Holy Writ, there was no *uniform* version in his native language, whether Latin or Gallican, and he was not eminent for his knowledge of Greek. The *versio Itala*, of which I have spoken before, was of most common use; but it was not universally preferred, and Jerome's revised or re-translated vulgate had not then been published. One instance of the many various readings which prevailed, may be seen in the eighth Psalm, which was the occasion of Martin's election to the bishopric of Tours.* The words then recited were 'ut destruas inimicum et *defensorem*,' whereas *ultorem* occurred in some copies.

But notwithstanding all these obstacles in the way of a perfect familiarity with Scripture, this persevering biblicist, from whom Vigilantius imbibed much of his knowledge and veneration of Scripture, was considered so good a textuarian, that Augustine, with all his deep acquirements in

* See page 20.

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sacred literature, consulted Paulinus, and submitted some of his writings to his correction.* The epistles of Paulinus show us how fluently he quoted from the Old and New Testament; and I trust I shall not be thought tedious, if I give some copious extracts from them, especially from those with which Vigilantius must have been well acquainted. When Sulpicius wrote to his friend to express his admiration of his self-denial, in devoting himself to almsgiving and exercises of devotion, Paulinus replied to him in this strain :—†

Scriptural quotation.

'How art thou to oppose thyself unarmed to the strong man armed?

'The blessed Job, when he was assailed, exclaimed, "Naked did I come out of my mother's womb."‡ Who will arm me against so many hosts of the enemy of the powers of the air, in order that I may not return to the earth, "*naked as I came out?*"

'But I breathe again, I am comforted, I lift myself up. "God is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear."§ Though I have no arms of my own, I will not lose my confidence. I have the armory of Christ from which I may "*put on the armour of light,*"‖—with which I may wrestle "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers

* See Aug. Epist. 27 and 95. And Paul. Epist. 28.
† See Epist. II. Paul. ad Sulp. Sev.
‡ Job i. 21.
§ Psalm xxvii. 1, 3.
‖ Rom. xiii. 12.

of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." * Against these He will be my armour-bearer, He will be my ensign-bearer, who is "the chosen vessel unto the Lord." † "*He shall gird my loins about*" ‡ *with chastity.* (In the original the word is "truth," and this is one of the incidental proofs of the force of superstition over the mind of Paulinus, with whom nothing without celibacy was truth.) He shall put "the helmet of salvation" on my head. He shall give me "*the breast-plate of righteousness.*" § He shall protect me with "the shield of faith," and He shall arm my right hand, (yea the whole of me,) as the right hand of Christ, with the "*sword of the Spirit,*" *and with the* "*sword of truth,*" ‖ in order that a "thousand shall fall at my side, and ten thousand at my right hand." ¶

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'I am led in this place to the audacity, as I may say, to the audacity of asking, "Who art thou, Lord," ** "who hast made heaven and earth?" "who appeared in the flame in the bush," †† "who hast done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things in the Red Sea?" ‡‡ Will no one know thee yet? "Will this people only draw nigh thee with their lips, while their hearts are far from thee?" §§ And shall the Gentiles, "which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law," ‖‖ confessing "the

* Ephes. vi. 12. † Acts ix. 15. ‡ Eph. vi. 14.
§ Ibid. vi. 14. ‖ Ibid. vi. 16, 17. ¶ Psalm xci. 7.
** Acts ix. 5. †† Acts vii. 30. ‡‡ Psalm cvi. 21, 22.
§§ Isa. xxix. 13. ‖‖ Rom. ii. 14.

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power of God?" Where is the difficulty of knowing what God is, when "the heavens declare the glory of God,"* and "the invisible things of him are understood by the things that are made?"†

These extracts, in the rapid transition from one scriptural passage to another, prove that Paulinus had scripture at his finger's end; but they exhibit also the perpetual tendency of his mind, to put forced constructions upon Christian precepts. 'He interlaced his discourse with an infinite number of scriptural passages,' says Du Pin, 'and often gave them a meaning different from the natural construction, and we must confess that his allusions and allegories are often too far-fetched and puerile.'‡ In his fourth letter to Sulpicius there is an example of this which we cannot contemplate but with feelings of dissatisfaction amounting to disgust. 'Therefore let us love him, whom it is our debt of duty to love; let us kiss him, whom we can kiss with chastity; let us embrace him, whom it is chastity to espouse.' The original words are too extravagant to admit of literal translation.‖

A similar straining of scripture to his own purposes is discoverable in his seventh letter to Sulpicius,¶ when after having described the sackcloth and the cropped hair, and the half-shorn beard,

* Psalm xix. 1. † Rom. i. 20.

‡ Bib. des Aut. Ecc. 3, 499.

§ See Epist. IV. p. 76. Antw. Ed. 1622.

‖ Ergo illum amemus quem amare debitum est. Illum osculemur quem osculari castitas est. Illi copulemur cui nupsisse virginitas est.

¶ Antw. Ed. p. 103.

and the squalid appearance of those whom he considered to be true monks, he goes on to say, 'But the countenance and the dress, and the smell of men of this description, will excite disgust in those to whom "there is the savour of death unto death."* "*Who call evil good, and good evil.*"† "Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter;" and foul for chaste, and enmity for holiness.' A. D. 394.

The letter of Paulinus to Aper and Amanda, on the management of their property, is a more pleasing proof of his familiar acquaintance with scripture, and of the graceful manner in which he was wont to give a serious turn to his own thoughts, and to those of his correspondents. The mention of the concerns of a farm leads him to observations of this kind—'The same attention to the business of the farm, which you expect on the part of your steward, God expects from you, and such must be the cultivation of your hearts.'‡ 'We perceive how much instruction may be drawn from country life, in those precepts in which God directs his servants to the ant and to the bee;§ the one showing how provision is made for the future, by collecting grains of corn; the other as gathering honey from the flower. And our Lord in the gospel perpetually refers his disciples to rural objects. The fig-tree, and the

* 2 Cor. ii. 16. † Isaiah v. 20.

‡ 'Qualem agri tui speciem fieri a villico tuo, talem deo domino cordis tui redde culturam.'—Opera Paul. 268.

§ Denique quantum de rure, &c.

A.D. 4 fields of corn ripe for the reapers,* are made to show the signs of the times; and we are taught by the tares that are sown in the field of the careless husbandman, how necessary it is to be spiritually vigilant.' †

Towards the end of this epistle, he makes a most forcible and ingenious application of the language of the prophet Joel,‡ 'Let not the prediction of the prophet be realized in you—"That which the palmer-worm hath left, the locust hath eaten; and that which the locust hath left, hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left, hath the caterpillar eaten." For there are in us just as many incentives to sin—hope, fear, joy, and grief,—two, as regards the present,—joy and grief; and two, as regards the future,—hope and fear: therefore we must beware lest when we shun the former, we fall under the latter. The palmerworm, and locust, and cankerworm, and caterpillar represent the violent passions by which we are consumed: of which some prey but a short time on the heart, others increase gradually, and if they are not immediately cast out, they penetrate to the vitals, and destroy all the moisture of the soul.'

I have much greater pleasure in selecting extracts, which exhibit the right application made by Paulinus of his scriptural studies, than in pointing to the erroneous use of holy writ: not only because I confess that I cherish an affection for

* Mark xiii. 28. Luke xxi. 29. John iv. 35. † Matt. xxiv. 40.
‡ Joel i. 4, ne fiat in vobis, &c. p. 270.

his memory, notwithstanding his many grievous sins against the simplicity of the gospel, but because I wish also to open to view the source, from which Vigilantius drew much of his Biblical knowledge, and where he learnt to measure every truth proposed to him by the divine standard. In a letter of Paulinus to Florentius, Bishop of Cahors, 'Christ the Rock' is thus commended to our devout meditation.* A.D. 394.

'Christ is the Rock which follows us with a flowing fountain into the wilderness of this life,† when we are athirst for righteousness, that we may be refreshed with a sweet draught, and may not be burnt up with the flames of evil desires. He is the rock on which the house is built that cannot fall.‡ He is the rock on which the man may dig deep:§—from whose side, pierced with the lance, there flowed water mixed with blood ‖—that he might pour upon us, as out of the fountains of salvation, the water of grace, and the blood of the sacrament, which are at the same time the cause and the price of our redemption.'

In another epistle, he speaks of Christ in the same strain. 'He now offers himself as the foundation, and the top of our building, because he is the beginning and the end, and the same stone; for Christ¶ is the stone without which no man can build a solid structure.'**

* Ad. Flor. Epis. Epist. XXXII. p. 283. † 1 Cor. x. 4.
‡ Matt. vii. 24. § Luke vi. 48. ‖ John xix. 34.
¶ *Christ* is here described as the rock, not Peter.
** Epist. 12, ad Sulp.

## CHAP. IX.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 395. Ordination of Vigilantius.

I CANNOT distinctly make out when Vigilantius was ordained priest. Gennadius,* who flourished about a century afterwards, says, that he had served a church in the diocese of Barcelona, but he does not say when. Fleury, Du Pin, Bayle, Baronius, De Marca, and Pagi, follow Gennadius, and represent him as having officiated as priest at Barcelona; they do not however agree as to time. De Marca and Pagi† think that he was ordained at Barcelona, at the request of Paulinus. Others are of opinion that he was first admitted into priest's orders in a Gallic diocese, and that he had nothing to do with a church on the other side of the Pyrenees, until he was banished from Gaul, for writing against the corruptions of the church. Contemporary history does not give us any certain

* 'Vigilantius presbyter, natione Gallus, Hispaniæ Barceloni ensis parochiæ Ecclesiam tenuit.'—Gennadius, Catal. Scrip. Eccles. c. 35.

† Pagi. Crit. Hist-Chr. in An. Bar. II. p. 74.

information either as to the time or place of his ordination ; but there were so many hasty and irregular consecrations at that period, that I am inclined to believe that Vigilantius was made priest at the recommendation of one of his patrons, Sulpicius or Paulinus, soon after his first visit to the latter in 394. It was no uncommon thing for a bishop to confer orders on one of the dependents of a man eminent for his sanctity, at the request of the patron. We have an instance of this in one of Paulinus' letters to Amandus. 'I commend Marius, the bearer of this epistle, to your notice, and I beg that he may be ordained in your church, according to the tenor of a request which I have already made to my father, the holy bishop. I have affranchised this servant of mine, now our fellow-servant in the Lord, and have given him his liberty for the Lord's sake.' A. D. 395.

The reason added by Paulinus is a curious proof, that prayers for the souls of the dead were offered up at this early period as part of a priest's office, at the request of a benefactor to the Church. 'I have done this,' he continues, 'that he may perform the obsequies in memory of my parents in the Lord's house, and that, in the performance of religious services, he may enjoy true freedom under your protection. Pray see that he obtain from the holy priest Exuperius a small portion of the glebe, which belongs to the Church, for his subsistence.*

* Nunc sane Marium portitorem hujus Epistolæ commendamus specialiter unanimitati tuæ ; ut, sicut rogavimus sanctum Episcopum et

A. D. 395.

It is very likely that the same sort of favour conduced to the ordination of Vigilantius; but where, or under what bishop I cannot say. This, however appears certain, that he was in priest's orders in the year following (395), and that he was then unattached to any particular church, and not confined to the limits of a parish, but travelling for his improvement in the East. Vigilantius was hitherto in a dependent situation, and this accounts in part for the reserve, which he seems to have maintained on any differences of opinion, if such existed between him and his two patrons. There is no evidence to show that he had yet openly broached tenets, which churchmen of that day would have considered questionable. It is most probable that his mind was not yet emancipated from the bondage, in which it was held, and that he required to see more of the corruptions into which the Christian Church was plunging, before he could undertake to act the part of a Reformer, or Remonstrant.

A double opportunity was offered to Vigilantius, in the year 395, of witnessing the spiritual degradation to which the best of men may be reduced, when once they attempt to mingle together the discordant elements of Paganism and Christianity,

patrem nostrum, ita ordinetur a vobis. Conservum enim eum, data in domino Libertate, reddidimus: sed vobis in domo domini serviat: delegatis ad parentum nostrorum memoriam obsequiis, ut per religiosam servitutem obtinere firmam libertatem sub vestra defensione mereatur. Age et apud sanctum presbyterum fratrem Exuperium, ut in casa ecclesiæ terrulam, qua victum suum procuret, accipiat.'—Paul. Epist. 21, aliter 12, ad Amandum.

and to preach "another Gospel." At his father's death, he succeeded to the wealth amassed at the inn and posting-house of Calagorris, and this enabled him to undertake a journey to Palestine and Egypt. A.D. 395.

Second visit of Vigilantius to Nola.

Campania was not much out of his way, and Paulinus could supply him with letters of introduction to Jerome, and other distinguished ecclesiastics. Again, therefore, we accompany him to Nola, where his patron was now endeavouring to heal the wounds of an unquiet conscience, by practices equally debasing to the Roman patrician, and to the Christian penitent.

Saint-worship.

The great error of the day consisted in seeking for the intervention of some created being, between the soul and its Creator. The worshipper, whether Pagan or Christian, did not approach the eternal throne at once, but he stopped short at the shrine of some imaginary mediator, and here he offered his oblations and his prayers. When he did not find the peace he sought for, or the benefit he desired to obtain, whether spiritual or temporal, he fancied that his offerings were unaccepted in default of some omission, not towards the Supreme, but in relation to the intercessor. He had not decked the altar or the effigy splendidly enough; he had not made his own character sufficiently conformable to that of the demigod, the hero, or the saint, in whose name he implored to be heard. He had not imposed sufferings upon himself, such as that object of his veneration had endured. He had not hungered or thirsted, or

A. D. 395. suffered cold and nakedness, and the extreme of want in an equal degree. He had tried his own patience and fortitude by no such agonies of mind or body as those, to which that honoured being had submitted. In short, he measured all his duties and merits by the qualities, real or fabulous, which had been ascribed to his Hercules or his Ceres, to his Saint Thecla, or his Saint Felix.

This was the sad delusion under which Paulinus laboured. Familiar as he was with the word of God in Holy Scripture, he yet squared his life and conversation more by the traditional virtues, which were attributed to martyrs and confessors of the Church of the second, third, and fourth centuries, than by the precepts of Christ, and the example of his disciples. The acts of the saints, as handed down in legendary tales of the East and West, and not the acts of the Apostles sanctioned by the authority of the universal Church, were taken for his guidance; and he made Nola his habitation, under the expectation, that in imitating the penitential exercises and devotions, and the self-denial of the saint of Nola, he should find rest to his soul.

At first he found all the repose and enjoyment, for which he looked. His extensive almsgiving left a sweet savour on his mind: his hours, when they were unemployed in devising and executing schemes for the happiness of others, were occupied in prayer and praise. His retirement from the world brought its own pleasures, so long as some rational project was unaccomplished: but when

he had fully carried out all his original intentions, he began to feel a craving for something new. There was a sameness in his largesses to the poor, in his entertainment of strangers, in the appearance of his Church, and in the routine of his daily offices of devotion, which gave him dissatisfaction. Had Paulinus mixed with general society, and made his charities and his devotions part of the business of his life, while he was taking his share in the public duties of the senator, and the land-owner, and the guardian of a great number of dependents, he might have been happy; but now he must seek for such excitement as was consistent with his profession as a recluse, and a monk. He must invent new penances. He must increase his austerities and mortifications. The body must be kept under with greater care, for no doubt the mind was uneasy, because the flesh was rebellious. He must eat less: he must sleep less, and punish himself more severely. Still he found not the self-complacency of which he was in search. Then other helps to piety must be discovered or invented. He must enrich his sanctuary with a fresh collection of relics. He must stir up his feeble devotion by the sight of pictures and images, to remind him how this saint spent years in the desert, and that saint lived weeks and months without eating or drinking. He must not suffer his eyes to sleep, or his eyelids to take any rest, until he has repeated so many prayers, or read so many pages. He must call all these ex-

A. D. 395.

Unsatisfactory expedients to stir up devotion.

A. D. 395.

pedients to the help of drooping piety. It must be excitement upon excitement.

This was the mood in which Vigilantius found Paulinus on his arrival at Nola in 395. The active mind requires incessant occupation, and the religious votary who quits busy life to serve his God in seclusion, must necessarily resort to fresh fuel to feed the fire and keep alive the dying embers of a heated imagination. An idler, whose strength is to sit still, or one who has no very impulsive temper, may quietly settle down in the dulness of an ascetic or monastic life; but Paulinus was of a temperament which required continued excitement. He had been used from his childhood to a moving scene, and the devotional food which nourished him to-day would be tasteless and vapid to-morrow. And so it was when he turned his back upon the engagements, the honours and the conversation of the world: he thought it sinful to derive amusement from the most innocent enjoyment of earth, even from its fields and gardens and flowers. He felt the curse of a dull void amidst all his long promised charms of seclusion, and with feverish impatience he sought for new objects on which to fix his languishing attention. He dug for relics near home, and sent any distance for a rag or a bone, which had the reputation of having belonged to a martyred Christian. He contrived to collect in his church some of the relics of St. Andrew, St. Thomas, and St. Luke, with morsels said to have belonged to the bodies of St. John the Baptist, of St. Agricola, St. Vital,

Vigilantius finds Paulinus more deeply immersed in error.

St. Proculus, St. Euphemia, and St. Nazaire.* He had a piece of the true cross, which he averred might be submitted to the flames without its being burnt. He listened to marvellous tales with the most implicit belief. No pretended miracle was too improbable for him: the more astounding and supernatural the event, the greater its charms for his disordered fancy. He prostrated himself before the tomb of his patron, St. Felix; and surrounded with the paintings and representations with which he had decorated the shrines that covered the bones of that martyr, he became so impressed with the solemnities of a place of his own creation, as to feel persuaded that he heard and saw things, which are beyond the reach of the human senses. Upon his hard couch, to which he retired after painful watchings and labours, he dreamed of unearthly objects, and the vision of the night was received as a reality. A. D 395.

Such was Paulinus at Nola, the second year of his residence there. But would so good a man be a deceiver? Would the noble and wealthy patrician have been able to turn his back upon the attractions of life, unless he had received such miraculous support as he described? Would the learned scholar, the elegant poet, the charming associate of the greatest men, the choicest spirit of his age, surrender the companionship of such friends, as those with whom he had been in the habit of consorting, unless he had the angel visits, and the heavenly communications, with which he professed to be The reflections of Vigilantius.

* Nat. Paul. ix.

A. D. 395.

favoured? Would the saint, who had the gift of continence and self-denial, be likely to mistake the illusion of his own mind for realities? Would the scripturist, who could recite and apply the word of holy writ with the utmost fluency, would he be likely to misunderstand, or to trangress the oracles of God? Such may have been the reasoning of Vigilantius, when he felt himself unable to resist the influence of such an example and such an authority.

"Do not believe all the kind things Romanian will say of me," said Augustine in a letter to Paulinus, "for fear you should think better of me than I deserve, and lest you should pray less for me than I require."* If this beautiful sentiment and instructive lesson had been more generally followed, the unbounded admiration of holy men of old, which has led to so much error, would have been moderated.

His faith again in peril.

It is wonderful that Vigilantius did not become a sceptic, or a confirmed bigot, during this visit to Nola, for he now saw the very worst species of idolatry that could be exhibited, by men calling themselves Christians, not only under the sanction, but absolutely under the direction of Paulinus. Was it that the extravagance of the scenes he witnessed acted as a beacon to put him on his guard? Was it that he consulted scripture the more frequently and the more humbly, when he beheld Paulinus tottering on the slippery places,

* Aug. Epist. ad Paul. 32.

upon which he had ventured to set his foot? Was it that finding the most complete discrepancy between what he saw and heard at Nola, and what he read in the volume of truth, he prayed the more earnestly for heavenly guidance, and received it? Was it that his eyes were opened to understand, that good cannot sanction evil, and that the most spiritual men of that generation, wiser though they may have been than himself, were not wiser than God, who had forbidden many of those things which he saw Paulinus perform? A. D. 395.

The miracles related in the Bible were wrought, that they might act as testimonies against worship offered to any but God alone, and they were recorded as memorials of the divine will. But the signs and wonders, of which Vigilantius heard talk at Nola, were attestations to which Paulinus appealed, in proof that the dead man Felix ought to be invoked; that cures had been, and again would be, wrought at his tomb; and that heavenly blessings would reward those who should decorate his shrine, and pray in his name, and implore his intercession! Many things, that the ancient Church of God had been forbidden to do at their religious festivals, because the heathens did those things, and because they led to the abominations of the heathens, were openly done in the sanctuary dedicated to St. Felix. Banquettings were held in his honour, in the very church itself; revellings and drunkenness followed, the roof re-echoed with voices of blasphemy and idolatry. The pave- Corruptions at Nola.

A. D. 395. ment reeked with the filthy remnants of the feast, and with the filthier proofs of gluttony and intoxication; and the misguided man, who gave occasion to this impiety, was infatuated enough to endeavour to recal the besotted worshippers to more decent behaviour by setting up pictures in the church of Nola,* in direct violation of the canons of the council of Eliberis, and in defiance of the warning word of God himself;—"Woe unto him, that saith unto the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach."† Yes, Paulinus after introducing those abominations into his house of prayer, which the word of unerring wisdom had proclaimed to be "a snare," and "a cursed thing;" and a thing to be utterly detested, and utterly abhorred,‡ carried his infatuation still further, by decorating the walls of his church with pictorial representations, under the vain hope, that figures of St. Martin and of other holy men, might instruct his riotous banquetters, and teach them purer morals and better manners.

The progress of these corruptions.

The following was the lamentable progress of the mischief, as we collect from the account which Paulinus himself gave of the solemnities in honour of St. Felix.§ First of all he circulated reports that miracles were performed at the tomb of St. Felix, and that extraordinary cures were vouchsafed to those who prayed at the sepulchre of the saint for his intercession;—then he enlarged the oratory dedicated to St. Felix,

* See infra, p. 217. † Hab. ii. 19. ‡ Deut. vii. 26.
§ See his Letters and his Natales,—Passim.

and fitted it up for these unhallowed scenes, and he established rites and observances, and an apparatus of worship, which were pagan forms of adoration under a Christian name. Processions were formed, the relics of the saint were displayed, incense smoked, and lights burned before his tomb: instances of his miraculous interposition were recounted, votive offerings were presented, and voices exclaiming 'Hear us, holy Felix!' 'Blessed Felix!' resounded through the church. Next he attracted multitudes from all parts of the country, by providing a great feast for those who should be in attendance; and he composed annual hymns in honour of the birth-day of Felix, which commemorated it as a day worthy of being celebrated among the holiest in the calendar. A. D. 395.

'Venit festa dies cœlo, celeberrima terris,
Natalem Felicis agens.'—Nat. 3.

So successful were the fables and the lying wonders and the multiform preparations, to which he resorted for the purpose of gathering deluded votaries from distant parts to sanctify the anniversary, that, in the year at which we are now arrived, 395, when Vigilantius was at Nola, an incredible number of people flocked to the solemnity. 'They assembled in such crowds, that there was no counting them; they kept arriving all the evening before; their footsteps disturbed the stillness of the night; their torches illumined its darkness. It was a dense multitude urged on by one vow and object. Lucania, Apulia, Calabria, Campania,

A. D. 395. Latium, poured in their population; worshippers came from Capua, Naples, and even from Rome. Nay, you might suppose it was Rome herself rising before you, and not Nola.' *

Having thus given Paulinus' own account of the swarms that fell down before the shrine which he had set up, in honour of the imaginary object of his invocation,—of the dead man concerning whose spirit he knew nothing, and could not say whether it heard him or not,—I will now let him describe the excesses committed on these *holy days* by the fanatical crowd, and the correctives with which he attempted to restrain them.

Excesses committed at these festivals.

' Oh that they would offer up their vows of joy with more sobriety, and that they would not be quaffing cups of wine within the sacred precincts! And yet I think some allowance may be made for those who indulge themselves a little in those festivals; because rude minds are liable to error, and simple piety is scarcely conscious of the faults committed, while it fancies that the saints will be pleased with the offerings of fragrant wine poured upon their tombs. What! do they approve after death of that which they condemned when living? Does the table of Peter receive that which the doctrine of Peter censured?'

' You have now reason to dread Felix; you are foolishly disregarding him; you are insulting him by your drunkenness; you think you are praying to him, while you are convicting yourself of sin.

* See Nat. III.

A. D. 395.

Wretched creature! you are making him the witness, and the avenger of your revels.'

'I have therefore thought it right to have the walls of St. Felix's sanctuary decorated with paintings, that an impression may be made upon the minds of the rustics, by means of pictorial representations; that the figures and the descriptions over them may teach a lesson; that they may think less of the banquet, while they are feasting their eyes with the imagery; that the sacred history, and the pious examples which it holds up to view, may have an happy influence with them, and that they may forget their wine and become sober.'*

Such abuses very common in the 4th century.

The abuse which Paulinus endeavoured to remove, viz. banquetting in honour of a saint, was very common, (even according to the admission of Tillemont) in the Christian church, towards the close of the fourth century. Ambrose endeavoured to restrain it at Milan. Augustine did all in his power to banish it from his diocese,† and Jerome spoke of it with disgust, complaining that even some of the monastic order would gluttonously feast themselves at festivals, until their stomachs rejected the load of food which they had swallowed.

'Si quando dies festus venerit, saturantur ad vomitum.'‡

But the misplaced indulgence, which led ecclesiastics of that period to be tender towards forms of heathenism, so long as they were disguised under a Christian mask, prevented their checking

* See Nat. IX. † Aug. Epist. LXIV.
‡ Epist. Hier. XVIII. Opera. Hier. IV. p. 45.

A. D. 395. the evil with a high hand, and denouncing it with the severe voice of authority. Thus it was tolerated until it became a crying sin. Though it was unusual in those days to have representations of men and animals painted in churches, yet the profanation was introduced at Nola, under the vain hope that pictures would serve as instructors, and teach a purer morality to the peasants who got drunk in honour of St. Felix. Tillemont's account of this proceeding shows how difficult the Romanists find it to excuse their favourite saints, when they sin against Scripture and the early Councils. 'C'etoit une chose extraordinaire en ce temps la de peindre des animaux et des hommes dans les Eglises, St. Paulin le fit en faveur des Paysans, qui faisoient le plus grand nombre de ceux qui venoient tous les ans à la feste de St. Felix. Comme c'etoient des gens fort grossiers, ils imaginoient honorer les saints de boire sur les tombeaux. Ansi ils passoient la nuit à se rejouir et à faire de petits festins dans l'eglise.' *

Such were the expedients of Paulinus to correct an evil, to which he had himself so largely contributed, by instilling into these poor rustics false notions of religion, and by drugging them into a state of feverish excitement; by making them drunk with the expectation of beholding miracles at the dead man's bidding. It was his fatal dictation and example, which trained baptized Christians to idolatry, by teaching them to invocate

Idolatry at Nola.

* Tillemont, Memoirs XIV. 105.

and adore a departed saint, and to kneel before his tomb and his relics! A. D. 395.

It may be thought that the language of Paulinus, in his hymns in honour of St. Felix, was only the extravagance of poetry, and a mere string of apostrophes. Then let us see how he spoke of the deceased martyr, when he was writing of him in sober prose. He had occasion to write to his friend Victricius, concerning a young man named Ursus, who had been taken ill at Nola; and the recovery of the invalid is attributed to the intercession of the guardian spirit of the place. 'The Lord permitted his disorder to reach a dangerous point, in order that the virtue of my patron saint's intercession might be made manifest.' *

It is not unlikely that Vigilantius transcribed this, and other records of the endeavours, which Paulinus was perpetually making, to magnify the merits and the miraculous powers of his '*Dominædius;*' but did he ever hear from his lips any words of caution against the abuses, which such creature-worship could not fail to rivet, like chains, about the necks of weak brethren? He saw Paulinus kneel and prostrate himself before the tomb of St. Felix, until he was so exhausted that he could scarcely raise himself up. He heard him supplicate the dead in language which it was idolatry to address to any but the living God. He heard him, after he had spent a whole night in the church, recount dreams as if they were realities,

* Paul. Epist. XXVIII. ad Victricium. p. 17. Ant. Ed.

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and repeat conversations, which his distempered imagination fancied to have passed between himself and St. Felix. He had to listen to incredible tales of the wonder-working ashes that lay beneath the shrines of the monastery,—of sicknesses removed, of disasters averted, of lost property restored, of crimes detected, of life prolonged, of conversions effected by the bones of a man, who had been numbered among the dead for a hundred years and more. He saw Paulinus making the very preparations which tempted a fanatical crowd, "to sit down to eat and to drink, and to rise up to play." He perceived that the mind of his patron was weakened, or was under so strong an illusion that he was running into all manner of puerilities, in his vain attempts to reconcile his idolatrous practices with his Christian profession. And all this time he was exhorted by the poor fanatic to take those very Scriptures for his guidance, which he himself was perverting to his own destruction. Most providentially the Gallic presbyter was led to compare the 'Paganized Christianity' of Nola with the simple worship of the apostolical age, and to see through the aberrations of Paulinus.

The witness of Scripture against such idolatry.

The true fathers of the Christian Church, who built only upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles, Jesus Christ being the corner-stone, had all understood the scriptural exhortations against idolatry and "provoking the Lord to jealousy," in the plain meaning of the passages, which forbade them "to lust after evil things,"

and to imitate the religious customs of the heathen world, in any of its ensnaring practices. "Flee from idolatry," (1 Cor. x. 14.) "Keep yourselves from idols." (1 John v. 21.) "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen." (Col. ii. 18.) Such were the apostolic directions in explanation of the plain commandments delivered by the prophets of old, from the mouth of God himself, "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,—and shouldst be driven to worship them and serve them." (Deut. iv. 15, 16, 19.) "Take heed unto yourselves lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of anything which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee." "Neither shalt thou set up any image which the Lord thy God hateth." (Deut. xvi. 22.) A. D. 395.

Vigilantius knew that these were the inspired and scriptural injunctions against paying religious honour to material representations, and to effigies made to resemble created things, be they the elements of light and life, or rational beings like ourselves. He knew that the Holy Ghost had prohibited all creature-worship, because it leads to unimaginable evils. He was aware that a fond admiration of a departed object of affection leads to a superstitious honouring of the figure, by which that

A. D. 395. object is represented. What then must have been the workings of his mind, with the written word of God in his hand, and with the example of Paulinus before his eyes, provoking the Lord to anger by offences against that written word! To "flee from idolatry," and to "keep ourselves from idols," is to abstain from a superstitious reverence of the person whom we love, or respect, as well as to avoid the use of sculptured and pictorial representations, as helps to worship. Holy writ declares that the use of false helps in religious services leads to all manner of abominations, that it is a snare, a temptation, and a stumbling-block, that it is the beginning of "fornication against God," and that it ends in the deceived and deluded transgressors being delivered over to the severest judgments. "The Lord shall smite thee with madness and blindness, and astonishment of heart." (Deut. xxviii. 28.) Vigilantius saw the literal fulfilment of this curse in the persons of Sulpicius and Paulinus; they both outlived the strength of their faculties, and dwindled down to imbeciles; and the church, with the ecclesiastical system to which they belonged, has ended in forcing its members to worship the images, which at first it only commended to notice, as instructive objects, as memorials, and helps to devotion. At first the Latin Church only said to the dumb stone, 'It shall *teach*;' but now its language is, 'I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, and of the mother of God ever virgin, and also of the other saints,

are to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration are to be given to them.' * A. D. 395.

Apostolical authority and antiquity opposed to the errors of the 4th century.

We may talk of the authority and the antiquity of the Fathers, but if authority is to be respected, what authority should weigh heavier with us than that of the apostolical age itself? And if the Fathers of the Church claim our deference, who are to set themselves up against the opinion and the express injunction of the inspired Fathers of the first Christian Church? How can any Church of later days annul the sacred canons of those, who had the mind of Christ, and the spirit of the Holy Ghost? Everything that can be said to us on the authority of the Church, or on antiquity, and on the opinions of the Fathers and Councils, or even on Tradition, must, of necessity, by all the laws of sound argument, reason, and religion, enjoin us to hear the Church of the first century speaking to us in the Gospels, in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and in the canonical Epistles (which have received the sanction of the holy Catholic Church, that is, the whole congregation of Christian men dispersed throughout the whole world) before the Church of any after-period whatever. So thought Vigilantius, as soon as his mind was free to take a clear view of the subject; and therefore he then protested against saint worship, image worship, and relic worship, and all the 'old wives' fables' connected therewith.

And Vigilantius was not the only witness of his

* Creed of Pope Pius IV.

A. D. 395. time against the fatal corruptions, which were stealing into Christian sanctuaries, under the pretence of teaching the illiterate worshipper by means of pictorial descriptions. I beg the reader to remember the anecdote related of Epiphanius, who avowed and justified his hasty destruction of a painted curtain hanging before a shrine, because it was ornamented with a picture of Jesus Christ, or of some saint, he cared not which. 'I tore it down, and I rent it,' said he, 'because it presented to view the image of a man in a Church of Christ, *contrary to the authority of Scriptures*.' 'Cum ergo hoc vidissem in ecclesia Christi contra autoritatem Scripturarum hominis pendere imaginem, scidi illud, &c.' *

Epiphanius.

In another passage, speaking of the same profane use of pictures, Epiphanius declared, that it was contrary to the Christian religion: 'contra religionem nostram.' † The letter, addressed to John of Jerusalem, from which this account is taken, and in which Epiphanius protested that the use of images and pictures (for he expressly calls the picture of a man an image) is contrary to Scripture, and contrary to the Christian religion, was written in the year 396. It was the epistle of one bishop of the Christian Church to another; and yet at this very period, Paulinus was setting up images and pictures in his Church at Nola, and his authority for the practice has ever since been triumphantly appealed to by the Latin Church. So much for the consistency of Romanism!

* Hier. Op. IV. 828. † Ibid. 829.

And so much for the unity, and the wisdom of the fourth century, when one saint practised what another condemned! The uncompromising Christians of the primitive ages, and those who followed their example, sternly refused every compliance which looked like the most distant approach to the forbidden thing, but the pliant Paulinus, and the indulgent clergy of his age baited, instead of springing, the trap, which was so likely to catch the unwary. Romanists have since stopped short of nothing; they have even presumed to pourtray in their churches *Him*, who has said, "To what will ye liken me?" and there are soft and crafty counsellors now among ourselves, who would persuade us that we may safely make use of pictures, and such like prohibited helps to devotion, and who would tell us that painted representations of Christ, and the Virgin, and the saints, are not included in the commandment against idolatry. But the honest and plain spoken fathers of the Reformation, have proclaimed in the Homily against the peril of Idolatry, that 'Images came first from *the Gentiles* to us Christians;'* and that 'they teach no things of God, of our Saviour Christ, and of his saints, but lies and errors, and change the truth into a lie.' No *true* representation can be given of Christ, it must be a misrepresentation, a caricature. A. D. 396.

There is no simpler test to be made of the absurdity and falsehood of image-worship, than to

* Citing Eusebius and Jerome.

A. D. 396.

set people of different quarters of the world to make similitudes of adorable objects, and then to observe how the European would turn away in disgust from the woolly-haired, and thick-lipped Jesus of the Hottentot; and how the copper-coloured face, and Tartar brow of a Chinese Virgin Mary, would inspire anything but reverence or devout admiration in the mind of an Italian votary. A negro's effigy of the first or second Person of the Holy Trinity would absolutely be an object of horror to a white man!

I have not been able to make out the exact time or manner, in which pictures and images were first introduced as objects of adoration into Christian sanctuaries, but the language of Epiphanius, when he maintains that the practice was contrary to the authority of Scripture and of the Church, corresponds with that of his great contemporary Augustine, and convinces me that it was a profane novelty of the fourth century. 'I know,' said Augustine, 'that there are many worshippers of sepulchres and pictures, and that there are many who feast most luxuriously at the graves of the dead. And I mean to show in another volume how vain, and pernicious, and sacrilegious these practices are. But I admonish you not to reproach the Catholic Church, and to blame her for the practices of men, whom she condemns, and is constantly endeavouring to correct.' *

* Novi multos esse sepulchrorum et picturarum adoratores: novi multos esse qui luxuriosissime super mortuos bibant; et epulas cadaveribus exhibentes super sepultos se ipsos sepeliant, et voracitates ebri-

me on the other hand intimates that the tion of sepulchres and relics was univer- he end of the fourth century. ' Martyrum sepulcra veneramur, et sanctam favillam apponentes si liceat etiam ore contingimus.' ier. 4, 550. A. D. 396.

## NOTE TO CHAPTER IX.

s account of this proceeding of Epiphanius is worth tran- rom the Oxford translation, to exhibit the sophistry of Ro- The Oxford Editor's apologetic note is also curious, inasmuch utes the exclusion of images from the early churches not to to God's word, but to abhorrence of pagan idols.

end of his (Epiphanius) letter are these words :—" Moreover, en informed, that some have murmured against me, because were going to the holy place named Bethel, in order to perform ct there with you, on coming to the village Anablatha, and re, as I passed, a lamp lighted, I asked what place it was, and told it was a church, I went in to pray accordingly. I found fastened to the door of this church, upon which was painted , to represent Christ or some saint, for I do not perfectly the subject. Having, therefore, seen the image of a man to view in the church of Christ against the authority of , I tore the curtain, and advised those who kept that place wrap the dead body of some poor man in it, for his burial. rmured and said, ' If he must tear our curtain, he ought at ive us another in exchange.' When I heard this I promised nd accordingly I now send the best I could meet with, and to order the priests of the place to receive it, and to forbid

suas deputent religioni. . . Sed et illa quam vana sint, ia, quam sacrilega, et quemadmodum a magna parte vestrum, o penè ab omnibus vobis non observentur, alio volumine institui. Nunc vos illud admoneo, ut aliquando, Ecclesiæ maledicere desinatis, vituperando mores hominum, quos et mnat et quos quotidie tanquam malos filios corrigere studet.' Moribus Eccl. c. 34.

for the future the exhibition in the church of such curtains as are contrary to our religion; it becomes you to remove this scandal." If this part of the letter was really written by St. Epiphanius, it must be confessed that in this point he was more scrupulous than other bishops; for the use of pictures in the churches was received both in the east and west, as appears from St. Gregory of Nyssa, from Prudentius, and from St. Paulinus, who wrote at the same time. And there is mention made of a similar picture upon a curtain in a church in the book of the Miracles of St. Stephen, composed by the order of Evodius, Bishop of Uzala, St. Augustine's friend. However the customs of the churches might be different in this point, and the great number of Jews who lived in Palestine might render it necessary to use images with more reserve, that they might not be offended when there was no necessity for it.' *

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* "When persecution ceased, and faith, from the more mixed character of its professors, needed externals to impress the senses, we first find the erection of magnificent churches, and the introduction of various ornaments. Still the use of sacred *images* was long excluded, in consequence of the abhorrence of Pagan *idols*."—Note by the Editor. See Trans. of Fleury's Eccl. Hist. book xix. vol. i. pp. 231, 232. Ed. Oxford, 1843.

## CHAP. X.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 396.

Vigilantius leaves Nola for Palestine.

THE time was now come when Vigilantius was to move in another sphere, and to witness the strong contrast between the fervent piety of the western, and the dogmatical acerbities of the oriental Church. Distant scenes and far different society were to occupy his attention. The humble seclusions of Sulpicius and Paulinus, were to be exchanged for the bustling and disputatious schools of the East: for the cities of Egypt and Asia; or for the cells of recluses, which presented a strange appearance of solitude one day, and of a medley of visitors another day. Instead of the gentle manners of his two Gallic friends, who were full of the milk of human kindness, and whose errors were softened by the simplicity, and unquestionable piety that marked all their words and actions, he was now to engage with fierce polemics, who were perpetually ruffling their own tempers, and keeping animosities alive in the minds of others by questions that ministered to

A. D. 396.

strife. There was little of the disputatious spirit either in the disposition or the writings of Sulpicius and Paulinus. Tillemont has truly observed of the latter, that he did not write dogmatically, and that his pen was principally employed 'in the service of the heart.'* 'More entertaining than instructive,' is the character, I may repeat, which another eminent critic, (Du Pin,) gives of the pages of the Recluse of Nola. It may therefore be presumed, that *truth* has been the gainer, by the removal of Vigilantius from the quiet retreats of Aquitain and Campania, to the contentious arena of the East. Whilst he had the meek devotion, and affectionate charity of his early patrons to reconcile him in some degree to their unscriptural worship and 'paganized Christianity,' their errors may have been less dangerous in his sight than they afterwards appeared. There was much in the personal sanctity of his patrons, which would seem to atone for many of their opinions and practices: at all events which would render him indulgent towards them. I have remarked more than once, that up to this period of his history, there is no direct evidence of Vigilantius having openly opposed himself, either in argument or deportment, to the corruptions which he afterwards arraigned. But an incidental expression of Jerome, in a letter written in the year 396, (on which I shall enlarge in the proper place,) renders it not improbable that he had expressed

* 'Pour le service du cœur.'—Memoires, xiv. 144.

some opinions to Paulinus, before he set out for Palestine, which intimated dissatisfaction with the proceedings at Nola.* A. D. 396.

When he came to encounter similar error in bigots, whose acerbity and bitterness were enough to render even their virtues repulsive, then his spirit, like that of Paul at Athens, was stirred within him. He saw them wholly given to superstitions, which had a sure and undeviating tendency towards idolatry, and he began to discipline his mind, and to gird up his loins for the combat.

His first introduction to Jerome.

Vigilantius, A.D. 396, was the bearer of a letter from Paulinus to Jerome, and this was the introduction which made him personally acquainted with the most extraordinary man of that age. Jerome was the terror of his contemporaries; the man above all others, who, in a mistaken attempt to do his duty to God, failed most signally in his duty towards men, unmindful of the Apostle's words "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar," † &c. The mortification of the flesh had tended to puff up his spirit, and of all the polemical writers of the 4th century, he was the most bitter and severe. I have already shown that he excelled not only in general erudition, but in the knowledge of languages ancient and modern; and at a period when literary works of the most laborious and voluminous character were undertaken and completed, Jerome surpassed every other author, in the number and the importance of

* Hier. Oper. iv. Pars. II. p. 277. † 1 John iv. 20.

A. D. 396. his productions. He was at this time in correspondence with persons of eminence in every part of Christendom; he was the confidential adviser of the most celebrated saints of both sexes; he gave a tone to religious opinion; he pronounced upon orthodoxy and heterodoxy with a voice of authority; he was dreaded by those who loved him most; and he was courted as much out of fear as respect. He became a literary, theological, and ecclesiastical oracle, by the bold and confident manner in which he dealt out praise and censure, and thus he took the world as it were by storm. Jerome was daring, sarcastic, and uncompromising: and he exercised that control over the minds of others, which bad tempered men of talent usually secure in a greater degree than persons of a more kindly disposition, though they may be of equal abilities and attainments.

We may easily imagine the impatience, mingled with dread, with which Vigilantius looked forward to his first interview with this eminent man; and associations connected with the spot, where they were to meet, must have added greatly to the interest he felt in undertaking a journey to Palestine. The glowing descriptions of Bethlehem and of the holy company of saints assembled there, which had been written by Jerome himself, and under Jerome's direction by Paula and Eustochium,* and others, must have been known to the Gallic traveller, and made his heart warm not only to

* See Oper. Hieron. Vol. IV. p. 545—551.

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he place, but to those also who sojourned there. These were represented to be the choicest spirits of the age; the good, the learned, the pious, and he accomplished, who were drawn from all parts of the world in hope of becoming wiser, better, and more devout in Palestine. As Athens was the favourite resort of the first scholars of their times, who burned to behold the place where poets and philosophers had sat and discoursed, and to meditate over their tombs; so the hallowed localities of Judea were equally and even still more dear to Christians, who longed to be where patriarchs and apostles had received inspiration from above. 'Wheresoever the carcase is, there shall the eagles be gathered together;" and according to one of the accounts which we read in the voluminous works of Jerome, saints assembled together at Bethlehem, and exhibited the appearance of every virtue. 'Their tongues are different, but they have only one form of religion. Here are choirs composed of all nations, and there is no speech nor language, in which the singers do not pour forth their sacred melodies. In the midst of all this, which is the very essence and charm of Christianity, there is no assumption of superiority, no supercilious pride which says, "I am more continent than thou." The only contention is who shall be the humblest. The last is the first. No distinction of dress is seen here; no admiration is expressed; do as you will, you will neither be censured nor praised. The excess of fasting will not raise you in the estimation of others; no

Bethlehem a place of general resort at the end of the fourth century.

A. D. 396. deference is paid to exhaustion after long abstinence,* and temperate satiety is not condemned. To his own Master every one standeth or falleth: no one judgeth another, lest he be judged of God. The slander and gossip which are common to other countries are totally unknown here. There is no luxury, no indulgence; on the contrary there are so many shrines and oratories, that you cannot offer up your devotions at them all in one day.'†

This beautiful picture of harmony and peace was drawn about six years before Vigilantius visited Bethlehem; but the visions of Christian loveliness and charity, which had floated before his eyes during his journey, were chased away by coming into collision with persons, whose tempers had been soured, and whose good dispositions had been perverted by the very expedients adopted as the safeguards of virtue. The local charms of the scenery were just such as he expected to find, but the paradise of the mind was not to be discovered.

Description of Bethlehem

'In summer,' says one of the contemporary descriptions of Bethlehem, to which I have just referred, 'the overshadowing hills and the rich foliage of the trees afford a shade from the heat of the sun, and in autumn the temperature is so genial as to invite to those sauntering walks, and to those hours of meditation, which the serious and thoughtful love to spend reclining on ground strewed with leaves. In spring the fields are painted and scented with flowers, and are

* 'Nec defertur inediæ.' † Opera Hieron. iv. Pars II. p. 551.

resonant with the songs of birds; and in winter there is no fear of cold where abundance of timber secures a plentiful supply of fuel.' * A. D. 396.

Vigilantius at Bethlehem.

On descending the slope of the hill, which sheltered Bethlehem from the north, Vigilantius followed a narrow road overhung by rocks and trees, and every step he took was enlivened by the sound of Psalmody proceeding from the peasantry, as they plied their field-work at the entrance of the village. 'In every direction,' says the writer of the letter of Paula and Eustochium to Marcella, 'where there is a sound of human voices, it is the voice of Psalmody. If it be the husbandman guiding his plough, his song is Hallelujah! If it be the shepherd tending his flock, the reaper gathering in his corn, or the vine-dresser pruning the tendrils, his chaunt is the same; it is some song of David that he sings. Here all poetry is sacred poetry, and every feeling of the heart finds utterance in the language of the Psalmist.' †

The aspect of Bethlehem on entering the village was that of holy ground. Every building seemed dedicated to religion, and Vigilantius saw at a glance that it would require many hours to visit the churches, and shrines, and monasteries, which presented themselves before him.‡ The grove of Adonis and the temple of Venus no longer desecrated this hallowed ground; the cross now stood

* See Oper. Hieron. Epist. 45, alias 18. Vol. IV. Pars II. p. 553.

† Ibid. p. 552.

‡ Ubi sunt latæ porticus, &c. Ibid. p. 551.

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where emblems of impurity had been erected by the Emperor Hadrian.*

Jerome in his cell.

A narrow bye path leading off from the street, at the spot where the tomb of King Archelaus formerly stood, conducted the traveller to the cell of Jerome; here he found the ascetic clad in a vestment so coarse and sordid,† that its very vileness bore the stamp of spiritual pride, and seemed to say, "Stand off, my wearer is holier than thou." The face of the monk was pale and haggard. He had been slowly recovering from a severe illness, and was wasted to a shadow. Frequent tears had ploughed his cheeks with deep furrows;‡ his eyes were sunk in their sockets; all the bones of his face were sharp and projecting. Long fasting, habitual mortification, and the chagrin which perpetual disputation occasions, had given an air of

* Ibid. Epist. 49, p. 564.

† In the inevitable inconsistency of his system, Jerome sometimes recommended a disregard of exterior appearance altogether, and censured vain-glorious rags as much as ostentatious foppery; at other times he would declare that no Christian recluse should ever think of wearing any thing but shabby clothes. 'Vestes pullas æque devita, ut candidas. Ornatus ut sordes pari modo fugiendi sunt, quia alterum delicias, alterum gloriam redolet. Non absque amictu lineo incedere, sed pretium vestium linearum non habere, laudabile est.'—Epist. 34, ad Nep. Op. Hier. 4, p. 262. 'Nulla fuit alia Romæ matronarum, quæ meam posset edomare mentem, nisi lugens, atque jejunans, squalens sordibus.'—Epist. ad Asellam, ibid. p. 66. 'Vestis ipsa vilis et pulla animi tacentis indicium.'—Epist. 88, ad matr. et fil. p. 732. 'Sordidæ vestes, candidæ mentis indicia sunt, vilis tunica contemptum sæculi probet ita duntaxat, ne animus tumeat, ne habitus sermoque dissentiant.'—Ep. 95, ad Rus. Mon. 4, p 771.

‡ Nunc jam cano capite, et arata rugis fronte, et ad instar boum palearibus a mento pendentibus.'—Ibid. 257.

gloominess to his countenance, which accorded but ill with his boast, that his cell to him was like an arbour in the garden of Eden. In conformity with his own* maxims, that cleanliness of body is uncleanliness of soul, and that an unwashed skin is preferable to frequent ablutions, Jerome's person exhibited proofs of his utter disregard of Christ's precept, "but thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head *and wash thy face*, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret." He was discoloured with dust and ashes, and the Pharisee of old was not more ostentatious of his cleanliness than was our recluse of his sordid apparel and dirty exterior. But though his figure was attenuated and downcast, and his face pale and emaciated, yet a brightness shot from his keen eye, which told of the fiery spirit that burned within that feeble frame. Vigilantius, like most others, on their first introduction to this austere man, shrunk instinctively from the severe and intent regard that was fixed upon him, notwithstanding the real kindness with which Jerome welcomed him to Bethlehem. After the first salutations were over, Vigilantius was given to understand that he ought to lose no time in adoring the holy relics, which the highly favoured village offered to his notice, and he observed that the monk scarcely uttered a sentence, or gave him

A. D. 396.

* Attention is directed to the following passages by Jerome's Editors. 'Munditiam corporis atque vestitus, animæ esse immunditiam.'—Ibid. 682. 'Ad victrices sordes redit, omnibus sæculi cultibus mundiores.' —Ibid. 561.

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a direction without making the sign of the cross.*

As was the custom with every pilgrim who visited Bethlehem, Vigilantius hastened to the spots which tradition asserted were the very scenes of the Saviour's first abode on earth: though, indeed, they were no longer identical either in character or appearance. The site of the humble inn where Christ was born was occupied by a church. The cottage, where Joseph and Mary are said to have dwelt, after the nativity of Jesus, was replaced by a shrine. The green turf of the hill, where the shepherds are supposed to have been watching their flocks by night, when the angels announced the Messiah's birth, had made way for the stone work of a chapel: and the once verdant slopes were now furrowed by the tracks of footsteps. But at each sacred station the Gaul knelt and prayed in all the fervour of a devotion, which was as sincere as it was ardent. This surely was the age of enthusiastic and impulsive feeling, and however much it is to be regretted that the piety of the fourth century was ill directed, yet we are not disposed to question its reality. Our quarrel is with the religious guides of those times, for pretending that things which Jesus had handled or touched were still in a state of preservation; for thinking to stir up the gift of God by improper means, and for

The sacred localities of Bethlehem.

* 'Ad omnem actum, ad omnem incessum manus pingat Domini crucem.'—Ibid. 46.

permitting the use of unnecessary and false helps to devotion. A. D. 396.

The legendary cradle of Jesus.

Vigilantius was assured that certain remains of wood-work were portions of the very manger in which Christ was born; * and it is probable that the exhibition of these objects, in all their revolting violation of truth, helped to remove credulities from his mind, which had hitherto been undisturbed. It is no wonder that he should have read and heard talk of such memorials with a certain degree of veneration, when he was at a distance from them, but after he had approached and examined them, and discerned symptoms of modernity and imposture, he might well think of them with doubt and distrust.

The real place of the nativity is supposed to have been a large cavern, or excavation in the rock, used as the stable or cattle-fold of the inn, which was too full to receive Joseph and Mary. "And laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." The word which has been rendered '*manger*' signifies, in the original Greek,† not the crib out of which cattle ate, but the place at large where they were fed, or in which they were confined or *stabled*. It occurs three

* Jerome himself assisted in propagating fables of this kind. See his Letter to Eustochium, (4, Part II. p. 673,) he speaks of the Stone which the angel rolled from the sepulchre, and of the pillar at which Christ was scourged, and of the grave of Lazarus, and the house of Mary and Martha, as if they were still to be seen in his time.

† Φατνη. '*Præsepe, stabulum.*' See the word in Parkhurst's Lexicon, and its use by Justin and Origen.

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times in the sacred narrative.* Therefore to talk of having seen the manger, as if it were *the very thing* which had been used as Christ's *cradle*, literally speaking, must needs be a fable: and yet this has been the language of credulity or imposture, from the fourth century to the present time.

'C'est proprement à ce retour qu'il, (Jerome) adora *la crêche*, et les autres marques de l'enfance du Sauveur qui estoient à Bethlehem.'†

'Incense is continually smoking before the *cradle* of the Saviour.'‡

But supposing that the term is used metaphorically, and that the *manger* or *cradle*, signifies the *grotto* only, or the *stable* where Jesus was born, then there is no reason to contend that the tradition is untrue, or to disbelieve that the cavern, over which a crypt and church have since been built, was the very scene of the event, which they are intended to commemorate. I envy not the feelings of the person, who can visit this consecrated place, with any emotions short of the most profound veneration and awe. To a devout spirit, however, the rock itself, and its cavern unprofaned by the intrusiveness of human architecture, would have spoken more emphatically, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground," than all the marble

Desecrations at Bethlehem

* St. Luke ii. 7, 12, 16, 'in præsepio.'—Vulgate.

† Tillemont, Memoires, XII. 104. 'Ubi adoravi præsepe et incunabula Salvatoris.' Hier. Op. 4, pars II. p. 461.

‡ Translation of Chateaubriand's Travels, Vol. I. Part III. Chap. III.

ınd the jasper which have since been employed to lecorate the revered spot, where the infant Re-leemer lay. A. D. 396.

In justice to Jerome, I believe that these were ıis feelings, and doubtless there was more sim-plicity in the Church of the Nativity, when Vigi-lantius worshipped in it, than there is now. In :he description of Bethlehem, which Paula and Eustochium gave to Marcella, at the dictation of Jerome, we find mention made of the unadorned ;anctity of the *Spelunca*, or *Præsepe*, where Christ was born.* But now the two churches con-ıtructed over the birth-place of Jesus invite to ad-niration, rather than to humility and prayer. In :he upper church, the forty-eight columns of Corinthian order, the marble floors, the wood work of cedar, the Mosaic and other pictures, the gold nd silver ornaments, and the decorations of culpture, painting, and drapery, which might be onsistent and becoming in any other sacred edi-ce, are absolutely *monstrous* and out of all keep-ıg with the spot, where Christ first 'came to isit us in great humility.' The subterraneous hurch of the Grotto of the Nativity, which is pproached by spiral steps from the edifice above, equally discordant in its embellishments. *Beautifully faced with marble,'* † according to one ıodern account; '*Elegantly fitted up, and floored ith marble,'* ‡ according to another; this '*hand-*

* 'Quo Sermone, qua voce Speluncam tibi possumus Salvatoris ponere? Et illud præsepe,' etc. Oper. Hier. 4. p. ii. p. 551.

† Chateaubriand. ‡ Russel's Palestine.

A. D. 396.

*some chapel*' would excite more profound devotion, if the attention were not attracted by a multiplicity of glittering objects, and if piety were not frittered away by minute frivolities.

'There,' says the guide to the wondering traveller, 'in that hollow, where is a piece of white marble incrusted with jasper and surrounded by a circle of silver, exactly *there* the Lord of heaven and earth was brought into the world.' And '*there* stands an altar, occupying the place where Mary sat, when she presented the child to the magi;' and '*there* knelt the wise men from the east, when they worshipped the infant Jesus.' And 'that block of white Carara in the recess, hewn into the form of a manger, and covered with blue satin embroidered with silver, marks the very spot where the divine child was laid upon straw.'

Where such objects are obtruded upon the attention, and faith is strained to rise up to the standard (I ought rather to say, to sink down to the level) of these legends, doubts injurious to the holy cause of religion too often disturb the spirit, which would fain dwell with devout and fervent belief on the only truth that is of importance, namely, 'Here, in this sacred locality, was born the "Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."' When we reflect that from the earliest times, worshippers have gone from all parts of the world to kneel and pray at the place of the nativity; and that to this hour Christians of every denomination, meet there to do homage before the Lord and giver of life, it is most devoutly to be desired, that nothing

should be seen or heard within that sacred grotto, that can raise a suspicion, or excite a scruple. May the late consecration of a Bishop of the Anglican Church, to preside over the Protestant congregations in Palestine, be the means of restoring a purer and a simpler character, both to the localities and to the worship, which call to mind the name and attributes of the holy child Jesus! A. D. 396.

From the Church and Crypt of the Nativity, Vigilantius was conducted to the chapel, said to have been erected over the bones of the Innocents murdered by Herod. Another visit of devotion was paid to the shrine constructed on the spot, where the shepherds were alleged to have been lying, when the angels announced the Saviour's birth. When these and other scenes, connected with sacred history, had received his adoration, and when the first fever of his mind was over, and he could more calmly withdraw his attention from the past to the present, Jerome began to converse with Vigilantius about Paulinus and his friends in Campania and Aquitain, and the praises which were bestowed upon the holy man of Nola, touched responsive chords in the heart of the young Gaul.

## CHAP. XI.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 396.

How Jerome's temper and austerities affected Vigilantius.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the attention that was shown to Vigilantius by Jerome, and although there was the utmost sincerity in the warmth of his first reception of the guest,* who was commended to his notice by Paulinus, yet there continued but little cordiality between them.

'You will learn from the Holy Presbyter, Vigilantius, with what avidity I received him. It is better that you should have it from his own mouth, than from my letter.'† So wrote Jerome to Paulinus, in answer to the letter of introduction, and the expression, '*Holy Presbyter*,' is a proof that up to this period, the Gallic Priest stood high in the estimation of all who knew him. What then was the first cause of the coldness of Jerome, which soon became hatred and rancour?

It must have been difference of opinion, and

* 'Nobis in Monasterio hospitalitas cordi est, omnesque ad nos venientes læta humanitatis fronte suscipimus.' Hier. Op. 4. p. ii. p. 455.

† Hier. Op. 4. p. ii. p. 568.

A. D. 396.

not misconduct on the part of Vigilantius, which gave displeasure to Jerome, and this difference of opinion had relation to tenets held at Nola as well as at Bethlehem. We discover this in a curious passage of the quarrelsome letter, which Jerome addressed to Vigilantius after he had left Bethlehem, and when the rupture had become serious. 'I was inclined to give every credit to the Epistle of the Holy Paulinus, and I did not doubt his judgment, when he spoke in your favour.'—'Nor do I now blame that holy man, because he would rather dissemble his knowledge of what was wrong in you, than bring any accusation in his letter against a protégé who was the bearer of it.'* It is evidently here insinuated, that Paulinus had found some discordancy between himself and Vigilantius before the latter left Campania. But on what subject? On a matter of opinion which did not affect either his character or his orthodoxy, else the term '*Holy Presbyter*,' would not have been applied to him.

My persuasion that such was the case is strengthened by the manner in which Jerome concludes the sentence, wherein he so designates Vigilantius, and boasts of his kind reception of him: 'You will learn from the Holy Presbyter, Vigilantius, with what avidity I received him; it is better that you should have it from his own mouth than from my letter; but I cannot explain why he should have proceeded on his journey, and

* Oper. Hier. 4. p. ii. p. 277.

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left me so abruptly, lest I should appear to be doing him an injury. But I detained him a little while in spite of his haste, and gave him a proof of my friendship, that you may learn from him, all you desire to know.' *

It is clear enough, that Jerome had no ground for complaining of anything unsound or disreputable in Vigilantius, when he spoke of him in such terms as these, and we must search for the cause of the mutual distaste that they began to entertain for each other in other considerations. This inquiry is necessary to the development of the history of Vigilantius, which cannot be traced but by a process of this kind. That part of the ecclesiastical system of the fourth century, which was peculiarly ascetic and rigid, found an impersonation in Jerome, who exhibited its worst and most repulsive traits in the whole tenor of his life and conversation. Sourness, bitterness, envy, intolerance, and dissatisfaction with every manifestation of sanctity which did not come up to his own standard, had become habitual to him, and were betrayed in almost everything that he wrote, said, or did. Censoriousness, and the spirit of invective, were amongst his most strongly-marked failings, and the very best men of the age did not escape his censure. The Recluses were not devoted enough to their retirement to please him; the charitable and self-denying had yet something more to give up; the pious were not long enough at their devotions; the reputed orthodoxy of the

Jerome an impersonation of the erroneous system of the fourth century.

* Ibid. p. 568.

sincerest Christians of his day fell short of his estimate; the Celibates, whether monks or virgins, came under his lash,—for associating with the married, and with persons who were still living in the world. In short, none pleased Jerome but those, who carried the principles and practices which he advocated to excess, and Rufinus was not too severe when he said of him, that he spared neither monks nor virgins, no, not even those whom he had before praised, and that he had libelled most infamously every order and rank of Christians. 'Even the Holy Ambrose, whose memory is still dear to all, was the object of his foul and unworthy attack; and Didymus, whom he formerly ranked among the living prophets and apostles, is now placed by him among those whose teaching is opposed to that of the Church.'* A. D. 396.

The 'golden-mouthed' John (Chrysostom) of Constantinople was not spared, but was brought under his lash with an insinuation which was even worse than open slander. 'Not to speak of his other flagitious proceedings, John received Origenists into his confidence.' †

A striking, and to Vigilantius, a most offensive exhibition of these traits of character, is likely to have occurred very soon after his arrival at Bethlehem. The conversation naturally turned upon Paulinus, and when the young Presbyter expected to hear Jerome speak of their common friend in terms of unmingled commendation, with regard to

Jerome's severe judgment of Paulinus disgusts Vigilantius.

* See Hier. Op. 4. p. ii. p. 456.
† Ibid. p. 727.

A. D. 396.

his self-denial at least, he was astonished to find that Paulinus had not yet made sacrifices enough to please the Recluse of Bethlehem. On this subject, Jerome's praise, to judge from his own correspondence, was faint, and expressed in terms which implied, that he considered it to be the duty of Paulinus to surrender all that he had for purposes of almsgiving. 'Let Paulinus hear the sentence pronounced by his Saviour,' "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." (Matt. xix. 21). 'Paulinus is turning precept into practice; he is taking up the bare cross, as a naked follower of Christ, and he is climbing the ladder of Jacob light and unincumbered. He cares not for a full purse; he changes his dress with his mind, and rejoices in sordid apparel; with pure hands, and a clean heart, he delights in real poverty. But it is no great matter to affect, or even to exhibit abstemiousness with a melancholy and downcast look, and in a shabby cloak, while his revenues are still so ample. When Crates, the rich Theban, went to Athens to learn philosophy, he flung away all his gold, because he thought that he could not be rich and virtuous at the same time. Shall we then imagine that we can follow the poor and lowly Jesus, whilst we are encumbered with gold; and under the pretext of alms-giving shall we cling to our wealth; and shall we think to dispense faithfully what belongs to another, when we cautiously reserve to ourselves our own?'

A. D. 396.

The austere monk also expressed himself in grudging language, as to the money which Paulinus had expended in building and decorating churches.

'The true temple of Christ is the soul of a believer, adorn this, clothe it, give to it, and so be to it in Christ's stead. What use is there in his lavishing precious stones upon church walls when Christ is suffering in the hunger of a poor man? His possessions are not his own; but they are entrusted to him as to a steward. Let him remember Ananias and Sapphira.'*

Stern and severe judgment is this, thought Vigilantius, to pronounce upon the generous and devoted Paulinus, who has given up rank, station, lands,—almost all that man holds dear for the kingdom of heaven! If Paulinus should sell all, and give to the poor, what opportunities would be left him for the exercise of almsgiving! Is he to be charitable once for all, and so to cut off the means of being benevolent in future? This is a species of moral Origenism, which cannot have been recommended by our Lord, whose words to the young man in the Gospel were those of rebuke for his boasting, and not an exhortation (for general practice) to the sacrifice of all one possesses!

There was another topic in discussing which Jerome did not appear to advantage. In the letter

* Under the full assurance that his conversation agreed with his correspondence, I have put these sentiments into the mouth of Jerome from his letter addressed to Paulinus, A. D. 396, in answer to the epistle brought by Vigilantius. See Hier. Op. 4. p. 563—6.

A. D. 396.

Suspicions of Jerome's inconsistency raised in the mind of Vigilantius.

conveyed by Vigilantius to Jerome, Paulinus had expressed a wish to visit Jerusalem, and in that spirit of contradiction which had now become a second nature with Jerome, he treated that aspiration after the holy city, in a manner which could not but make his guest suspect, that he was determined to find fault with the best men of the age, and to have a rule of his own whereby to judge of every proposition not made by himself. Another suspicion also crossed the young Presbyter's mind, viz. that, after all, Palestine was no longer the holy ground which Jerome himself had represented it to be; that pilgrimages thither were not so very desirable; and that there was no small inconsistency between the sentiments expressed on this subject by the oracle of Bethlehem at one time and at another. 'Why,' said Jerome, 'does Paulinus express so much anxiety to come to Jerusalem, the city which slew the prophets, and spilt the blood of Christ. The Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and the mother of us all, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, it is that which he should yearn after. True worshippers worship not the Father, either at Jerusalem or on Mount Gerizim, because God is a Spirit, and his worshippers must worship him in spirit and in truth. The gate of heaven is equally open, both in Jerusalem and in Britain. Anthony, and the exemplary monks of Egypt and Mesopotamia, and of Pontus, Cappadocia and Armenia, never saw Jerusalem, and the gate of Paradise is open to them. The blessed Hilarion, who was a

native of Palestine, and lived in Palestine, spent one day only in Jerusalem, that he might appear neither to disregard holy places when they were near at hand, nor to suppose that the presence of the Lord was confined to any one place. If Paulinus really desires to be what he is said to be, a monk, that is a solitary, what has he to do with cities?' * A. D. 396.

Language of this kind was the more surprising, because Jerome had on other occasions strongly recommended pilgrimages to Jerusalem. It was thus that he raised prejudices against himself, in the mind of Vigilantius, by speaking somewhat disparagingly of Paulinus, and mixing up censure with praise; nor could all that the monk had to say in explanation of his inconsistency, remove the unfavourable impression.†

It would not be an unprofitable inquiry, to show

* 'Non Hierosolymis fuisse, sed Hierosolymis bene vixisse laudandum est. Illa expetenda, illa laudanda est civitas, non quæ occidit prophetas, et Christi sanguinem fudit, sed quam fluminis impetus lætificat, quæ in monte sita, celari non potest.—Et veri adoratores neque Hierosolymis, neque in monte Gerizim adorant Patrem; quia Deus spiritus est, et adoratores ejus in spiritu et veritate adorare oportet.'—'Et de Hierosolymis et de Britannia æqualiter patet aula cœlestis. Regnum enim Dei intra vos est. Antonius et cuncta Ægypti, et Mesopotamiæ, Ponti, Cappadociæ, et Armeniæ examina Monachorum non viderunt Hierosolymam; et patet illis absque hac urbe Paradisi janua. Beatus Hilarion quum Palæstinus esset, et in Palæstina viveret, uno tantum die vidit Hierosolymam, ut nec contemnere loca sancta propter viciniam, nec rursus Dominum loco claudere videretur.—Cur, inquias, hæc tam longo repetita principio? Videlicet ne quidquam fidei tuæ deesse putes, quia Hierosolymam non vidisti.' Ibid. p. 564-5.

† See Jerome on this subject. 'Neque vero hoc dicens memetipsum inconstantiæ redarguo, damnoque quod facio,' etc. Ibid. p 564.

A. D. 396.

Re-action and traces and traits of character.

how naturally the human mind is inclined to take a contrary bias, when violent and injudicious attempts are made to guide it. Action produces reaction, and when a strain is put upon anything, whether it be at rest or in motion, its tendency is to fly off in an opposite direction, if the force be not properly adjusted and sustained.

Amid the scanty materials which we have for anything like a biography of Vigilantius, or even for a sketchy outline of his history, before the full development of his character, we are obliged to pick our way thus, by following in the track of his associates, and by seeing what there was in their conduct likely to influence his, either one way or the other. Knowing that, at a period subsequent to that now under discussion, he loudly protested against the celibacy, the pilgrimages, the austerities, and the saint and relic worship, which his religious friends took such pains to promote, we must see if there was anything so extravagant and revolting in their system, as to produce an impression unfavourable to an estimation of the discipline which they were anxious to establish. It was the discipline of the Church of the fourth century, which Vigilantius afterwards impugned. What, then, was there in that discipline, likely to raise scruples in a mind imbued with the simplicity of the Gospel message, as delivered by the apostles?

First of all, he did not perceive any symptoms of that calmness and composure of soul which the sacred localities and religious exercises of Bethlehem were said to produce.

"I found him whom my soul loveth."* This was Jerome's assertion,† but in few things did that monk exhibit the meekness and gentleness of Him, whose steps he professed to follow. Instead of being calmed, his mind seemed to be perpetually ruffled; and the invectives, which he uttered and penned, within sight of Christ's birthplace, and while many hours of every day were allotted to devotion, proved that sanctity of place, and the formal repetition of solemn services, do not of themselves act as a safeguard against the infirmities of temper, or tend to smooth the asperities of controversial bitterness. Vigilantius knew well that Jerome never failed to repeat the appointed hymns or prayers at canonical hours: at day-break, and evening, as well as at the third, sixth, and ninth hours; that he rose two or three times during the night to pray, and that he would neither touch a morsel of food, nor go out of, nor return into, his cell, without repeating his prayer;‡ and yet he could not perceive in Jerome either "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, or meekness." These are "the fruits of the Spirit," and the failure of them, when they were expected to be the production of excessive attention to burthensome Church ordinances, and to stated forms and hours of devotion, which wearied rather than strengthened the soul, exposed the defectiveness of the system. What value, therefore, was the young Presbyter taught to set upon the exaction

A.D. 396.

Vigilantius the witness of Jerome's infirmities of temper.

* Canticles iii. 4. † Hier. Op. 4. ii. p. 552.
‡ Ibid, p. 46.

A. D. 396. of painful services from morning till night, and even during the night, when he was aware that the acrimonious recluse was not made a better man by his own rigid observance of canonical rules, but would rise from his knees to pen an angry invective, or utter language borrowed from the coarsest vocabulary of the heathen, in his unmeasured reprobation of an adversary? 'The venom of the serpent'—'the nauseate vomiting of the man,'* 'A dog returning to his vomit'† 'An Epicurus in carnal indulgence'‡ 'A foul and swinish sensualist.'§ It was thus Jerome wrote and spoke of Jovinian, whose principal offence consisted in having maintained, first, that the holy lives of married people are as acceptable to Christ as those of celibates; secondly, that they who are regenerated in baptism cannot fall under temptation of the devil; thirdly, that eating with thanksgiving is as meritorious as abstinence; and fourthly, that all who keep their baptismal vows are equally rewarded in the kingdom of heaven.'‖

Another controversial writer had given offence to our great advocate of continency, by arguing, that the Virgin Mary had borne children to Joseph after the birth of Christ. 'Blasphemer'—'blinded with fury'—'madman'—'most ignorant

* Ibid. p. 146. † Ibid. p. 183. ‡ Ibid. p. 213. § Ibid. p. 226. These and similar expressions are strung together in such profusion in the pages of Jerome, that the Benedictine Editors of his works mark one of the passages in which he thus heaps insults upon his adversary, with the following marginal note: 'Invehitur acriter in turpem Jovinianum.' Ibid, p. 226.

‖ Ibid, p. 146.

and stupid of men'—'detractor and liar'—'dog-like calumniator,' these were a few of the select phrases, which Jerome did not hesitate to apply to him in vindication of the perpetual virginity of the mother of Jesus.* A. D. 396.

Where the temper and disposition of Christians, who lay down severe rules of outward observance, not only for themselves but for others also, do not correspond with their profession, and are not corrected by those rules: the non-conformist, whether from disinclination to follow them, or from scruples as to their accordance with the requirements of God's revealed word, is confirmed in his objections. He thinks that if such devotion were the devotion of the heart, it would have a corresponding influence on the character and conversation; and when he sees contrary results, he pronounces it to be nothing but that lip-service, which is unacceptable to God; and he judges of its general tendency by the effects produced on the individuals, with whom he is most familiar. It is impossible not to remark, in the history of Vigilantius, that he began to declare himself against the ecclesiastical system, which distinguished this period, very soon after his visit to Jerome, having failed to do so with the same openness and emphasis, during his familiar intercourse with Sulpicius and Paulinus. This shews that nothing betrays the unevangelical, and unscriptural character of Asceticism in all its traits,

Services, which do not improve the heart, are injurious to religion.

* See Liber adversus Helvidium. Hier. Op. 4. p. ii. p. 129.

A. D. 396.

whether of austerity, formalism, or imposture, more than that want of real charity, which is inseparable from it, where it is carried out to its full extent. While St. Paul was a Pharisee, and partook of the harshness and bigotry of that sect, he was fierce and unrelenting, but when he embraced the Gospel and understood its true spirit, he became pre-eminent for benevolence. He was gentle among his converts "as a nurse cherisheth her children." (1 Thess. ii. 7.) He besought them "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." How unlike to St. Paul's was the unhallowed and intemperate zeal of Jerome! Jerome had none of that 'kindness which is the key to the heart.' He and the system which he advocated were reciprocally reflected in each other, and the eyes of Vigilantius were opened to the defects of both.

Without making any further observations as to the effect, which the embroiled life and angry conversation of Jerome were likely to have upon a stranger, who went to Bethlehem in search of a perfect rule of holiness and spiritual happiness, I shall proceed to notice some of the ultra opinions which were continually slipping from the tongue and pen of Jerome, and which he could not have refrained from avowing in his intercourse with Vigilantius. If it had been the custom in those days to keep a journal, and if Vigilantius had noted down all that passed between Jerome and himself, we may suppose without any great stretch of the imagination, that dialogues of this sort would have been recorded.

Extravagant opinions of the merits of celibacy.

*Vigilantius*. Your estimation * of the virtue of celibacy is so great, that one would suppose you would have every man who professes to be religious to turn monk, and every virgin to devote herself to continency, and that you would like to see a total renunciation of matrimony. A. D. 396.

*Jerome*. I certainly do prefer the single to the nuptial state; but because I often make a comparison between the two conditions in favour of celibacy, I am not to be accused of detracting from the merits of married persons; or of drawing an invidious distinction between the married and the unmarried saints of Holy Writ. †

*Vigilantius*. Why then are you always commending virginity as if it were such an exalted virtue?

*Jerome*. Because the married woman's heart is divided between God and her husband. She is too often thinking of what will please her husband; but the virgin thinks of God only. Her very name *Virgin*, signifies that she is *holy* both in body and spirit.‡ But the wife, instead of giving up her time to fasting and prayer, must be thinking of her husband; how she is to please him, and look fair in his eyes, and how she is to prepare for his repast. And she is gazing in the mirror and tiring her hair, and painting her face,

* 'Carried away by his natural warmth, he so exalts virginity above wedlock, and widowhood above second marriage, that he seems to regard marriage as an evil, rather tolerated than expressly permitted.' Translation of Fleury, Eccl. Hist. i. 227. Oxford. 1842.

† Hier. Op. IV. pars ii. p. 142.

‡ 'Virginis definitio, sanctam esse corpore et spiritu.' Ibid.

A. D. 396. and looking to the kitchen and the cellar, and devoting herself to household concerns. Do you fancy she can think of God in the midst of this?* No. "She that is married careth for the things of this world, how she may please her husband."

*Vigilantius.* But in your admiration of virginity, have you not sometimes put a construction on Scripture, which other interpreters will not be inclined to admit?

*Jerome.* On the contrary, the whole tenour of Scripture is in commendation of celibacy, and especially the New Testament. Why was John the *beloved* disciple, and why did he lie in the bosom of Jesus? Because he remained a celibate. Peter could not question Christ as John did, because he had a wife.†

*Vigilantius.* But how do you know that John was a celibate?

*Jerome.* If you obstinately pretend to say that John was not a celibate, and insinuate that I affirm him to have been so, in order that I may exalt the merit of virginity, explain why he was loved more than the other apostles. Peter was only an apostle; but John was an apostle, evangelist, and prophet. All these privileges were conferred upon him, because he was a virgin: and to him, a virgin, was committed the charge of the virgin Mother, by his virgin Lord.‡

* Ibid. † Ibid, p. 168.

‡ 'Ut breviter sermone multa comprehendam, doceamque cujus privilegii sit Johannes, immo in Johanne virginitas: à Domino virgine, mater virgo, virgini discipulo commendatur.' Ibid, p. 169.

*Vigilantius.* But David was a married man, and et David was one of the most favoured of men. Ie was king and evangelical prophet, and Christ eigned to call himself the Son of David. A. D. 396.

*Jerome.* There are many mistakes about David ı consequence of a misconstruction of Scripture. 'he history of Abishag, the fair damsel, the 'oung virgin who cherished the king and minis- ered to him, is totally misunderstood. We are ıot to understand literally that a young and fair 'irgin was sought for to cherish the king in the oldness of his old age. Listen to the explanation ;iven by Solomon: "Get wisdom, get under- tanding; forget it not; neither decline from the vords of my mouth. Forsake her not and she hall preserve thee; love her and she shall keep hee. Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore ;et wisdom; and with all thy getting, get under- ıtanding." Prov. iv. 5—7. The word Abishag is o be understood sacramentally, and indicates the ıuperior wisdom of old men. It signifies that visdom which is peculiarly great in aged men.* It was wisdom which David embraced, and which cherished him, and not literally a fair young damsel.

*Vigilantius.* I should like to know what are your real sentiments on the subject of celibacy and matrimony.

*Jerome.* I will explain myself in a few words. It is not my saying, it is an old saying of Scripture,

* 'Sed et ipsius nominis Abisag sacramentum sapientiam senum indicat ampliorem.' Ibid, p. 258.

A. D. 396. that no man can serve two masters, the flesh and the Spirit. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." When there seems to be anything very severe in my treatise, look not to my words, but to the Scripture from whence they are taken. Christ a virgin and Mary a virgin commended the principle of virginity to both sexes.* The Apostles were virgins, or were celibates after marriage. Bishops, priests, and deacons are elected because they are virgins or widowers; or certainly it is understood that after being ordained to the priesthood, they are always to remain celibates. Why are we to deceive ourselves or to be disappointed? if we enjoy the pleasures of matrimony, are we to expect to reap the rewards of continency? † Do we wish to live sumptuously, to enjoy the society of our wives, and to reign with Christ in the company of virgins and widows? Shall the same person enjoy the rewards of fasting and gluttony, of squalidness and cleanliness, of sackcloth and silk? Lazarus received evil things during his life, and Dives, in his purple and fine linen and good fare, enjoyed the good things of the flesh whilst he lived; but they had different places after their death, the one had misery instead of pleasure, the other pleasure instead of misery. According to my judgment we must fol-

* 'Christus Virgo, Virgo Maria, utrique sexui Virginitatis dedicavere principia.' Ibid, p. 242.

† In all this the cardinal error of the times appears manifest. Jerome did not look upon eternal life as the *gift* of God through Jesus Christ, but as the reward of merit, to be won by sufferings.

low either Lazarus or the rich man.'* 'But I do not condemn either nuptials or conjugal union; and that you may know my real opinion, I tell you that I would advise every body to marry, who is afraid to sleep alone.'† A. D. 396.

It was thus that Jerome, aware of the inconsistency of his own reasoning, by perversion or straining of scripture, by a paradox or a sorry joke, attempted to make a good case out of a bad one. And it was then, as it has continued ever since; violent partizans and zealots reckon on success, and on obtaining an ascendancy in proportion to their vehemence and adroitness in the use of an argument and in the play of words. Fanatical and extreme opinions are sure to spread, when they are earnestly propagated by persons, who have previously obtained an advantage over their contemporaries by the reputation of learning and sanctity. The careless and indifferent refuse to take part in the questions which are raised. The humble and modest are silenced by the fear of appearing to measure strength with those whose intellectual superiority is admitted. The good and right minded may be fully sensible of the extent of the mischief, but they are slow to expose the errors of men who are eminent for some virtues. A general torpor or intimidation prevails among those who ought to

Reasons why Error spreads.

* Ibid, p. 243.

† 'Non damno nuptias, non damno conjugium. Et ut certius sententiam meam teneat, volo omnes, qui propter nocturnos forsitan metus soli cubitare non possunt, uxores ducere.' Ibid, p. 247.

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set about refuting the fallacy: neutrality, being mistaken for acquiescence, is favourable to the movement, and the evil spreads, until it arrives at a point beyond the intention and control even of the heresiarch with whom it originated.

Up to the period to which we have brought the reader, Vigilantius was among the number of those who perceived, but dared not attempt to expose the fallacies of Jerome's reasoning. Another subject on which the young Gaul had opportunities of ascertaining Jerome's opinions, will also admit of being introduced in the form of a supposed dialogue, in which the answers of the monk, far from being imaginary, are almost a literal translation of his own words.

Patristical notions of truth and falsehood.

*Vigilantius.* Are we to place implicit belief in the protestations of Martin and others, who have assured us that they were transported beyond human feelings, and that they really did enjoy supernatural comfort in the conversation of angels ?

*Jerome.* No doubt. The mind may be prepared by virginal continence and rigorous fasting for the enjoyment of such divine favour, and even while we are in the body we may hold communion with angels.* I myself have experienced the grace vouchsafed to fasting. When I was in

* ' Sic et in animo virginali, rore cœlesti et jejuniorum vigore, calor puellaris extinguitur, et in humano corpore, angelorum impetratur conversatio.' Ibid, p. 791. The author of the ' Church of the Fathers ' translates this passage—' So also in a virginal mind by celestial dew, and strict fasts, the warmth of youth is quenched, and the life of angels is employed in a human frame.'

the desert, and had totally subdued myself by long fasting, as God is my witness, after much weeping and praying, when my eyes were uplifted towards heaven, I sometimes seemed to be in the very company of angels, and in the gladness of my heart, I sung in the words of Solomon,* "Because of the savour of thy good ointment, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee."† A. D. 396.

*Vigilantius.* I have been told that those heavenly beings have been sent as ministers of punishment as well as of consolation, to recal a faltering saint to a sense of his Christian duties.

*Jerome.* I am a personal witness to this also. At one period of my life, I was too fond of reading profane authors. It was in Lent, and during a rigid fast, after passing whole nights in prayer and confession, I took up Plautus for my recreation. A raging fever consumed me, the vital powers were almost exhausted, and a slight palpitation of the heart was the only symptom of life. In this condition I was suddenly transported in the spirit to the tribunal of the judge eternal, where there was such an effulgence of light from the glory of those who stood around the throne, that I fell prostrate and dared not look up. I was asked what I was. 'A Christian,' was my reply. 'Thou liest,'‡ said the judge. 'Thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian, for "where thy treasure is, there is thine

* Ibid, p. 30. 'Nonnunquam videbar mihi interesse agminibus angelorum.'

† Cant. i. 3.

‡ 'Mentiris, ait.' Hier. Op. IV. pars ii. p. 43.

A. D. 396. heart also."' I became mute, and in the midst of the stripes that were inflicted on me (for the judge commanded that I should be beaten), I felt greater torture under the flames of conscience while I remembered the words of the Psalmist, "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Then I began to cry out, and to exclaim, Have mercy upon me! oh, Lord! have mercy upon me! At length some of those who stood about the throne knelt before the judge, and interceded for me. They implored pardon and time for repentance in consideration of my youth, on condition that I should pay the whole penalty due to my sin, if I should ever read the books of heathen literature again. I promised never to transgress and said, '0 Lord, if ever I shall read any secular works again, it will be a denial of thee.'* On making this vow I was dismissed, and returned to earth.' (Strange enough 'revertor ad superos' is the heathen expression). 'When I opened my eyes, to the astonishment of all around me, the tears which I shed attested the reality of what I had suffered. Fancy not that this was a trance or one of those vain dreams which sometimes deceive us. The tribunal before which I was called, and the fearful judgment which I dreaded are my witnesses. May I never have to suffer such torture again, under the livid weals which I had to exhibit, and the blows which I still felt after I awoke, and which

* 'Domine, si unquam habuero codices sæculares, si legero, te negavi.'—Ibid. p. 43.

made me read divine books with more diligence than I had ever shown in the study of human literature.* A. D. 396.

*Vigilantius.*—Are you to be understood literally when you speak of these heavenly visions? To your great comfort at one time did you really see and converse with angels? And at another time were you actually punished with stripes at the hands of these ministers of God's wrath? You speak of having felt the blows after you awoke. Was it a dream or a reality?

*Jerome.*—It is a new mode of interrogation to question a man closely on the subject of his visions. In the Treatise on Virginity, which I addressed to Eustochium, in order to direct her attention to sacred studies,† I may have spoken of that vision in terms which led her to suppose that it was more than a dream. But when we have great objects in view, such as diverting the public taste from heathen literature, we are justified in using some license. We have learnt that many styles of discourse may be used, and that it is one thing to write for the purpose of an argument

Falsitas dispensativa.

* 'Nec vero sopor ille fuerat, aut vana somnia, quibus sæpe deludimur. Testis est tribunal illud, ante quod jacui: testis judicium triste, quod timui: ita mihi nunquam contingat in talem incidere quæstionem, liventes habuisse scapulas,* plagas sensisse post somnum, et tanto dehinc studio divina legisse, quanto non ante mortalia legeram.'—Ibid. p. 43. When Rufinus reproached Jerome for the violation of the vow made on this occasion, Jerome replied, 'that it was only a dream.'—Ibid. p. 383.

† Compare Op. Hier. iv. pp. 43 and 383, 385, 414, 454.

* Var. lec., "liventes *fateor* habuisse *me* scapulas."

A. D. 396. γυμναστικῶς, and another thing for the purpose of giving instruction, δογματικῶς.*

Unhappily, for the Christian church, while Jerome talked of renouncing heathen literature, he taught and employed those unworthy artifices of rhetoric and disputation, which were learnt in the schools of heathen philosophy,† to the detriment of Christian simplicity and morality. Thus in his Epistle to Pammachius, in defence of his Treatise against Jovinian,‡ he appeals to the practice of Socrates, Demosthenes, Cicero, Plato, Theophrastus, Xenophon, Aristotle, and others, all of whom, as he said, at times spoke one thing while they meant another, and proposed things probable rather than true, to secure a victory. He refers also to Origen, Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinaris, as using similar weapons (slippery problems, *lubricis problematibus*) in their writings against Celsus and Porphyry, and hesitates not to bring Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, and Hilary, into the same category of writers, who were in the habit of advancing, not what they believed to be true, but what they thought to be necessary for the occasion.§ Nay, St. Paul himself is adduced by

* Ibid. Epist. ad Pam. 50. Ibid. p. 235.

† The errors of the schoolmen, and of the modern school of divinity, which now professes to teach 'reserve,' may be attributed to their fondness for the Aristotelian philosophy, which Luther exposed so ably.

‡ Ibid. p. 236.

§ The translator of the Oxford edition of Fleury's Ecclesiastical History abbreviates the passage referred to in this manner:—'He bids his censurers bear in mind the difference between writing to refute an error, and for simple instruction. In the first an author is

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Jerome as an authority for the practice of using falsehood where the interests of Christianity are at stake, or when an object is to be attained. 'Read St. Paul's Epistles,' says he, 'especially those to the Romans, the Galatians, and the Ephesians, in which he enters with all his energies into a controversy, and you will see what sort of use he makes of the contents of the Old Testament; and with what artifice, and prudence, and dissimulation he wields his arguments.*

In his Commentary† on the Epistle to the Galatians, the unscrupulous monk goes still farther, and argues that St. Paul did not rebuke Peter because he really thought him deserving of reprehension; but by 'a new mode of controversy,'‡ to edify the Gentiles, he pretended to reprove Peter in order that 'hypocrisy might be corrected by hypocrisy.' §

pt to take more scope, and does not always declare his intention. He is obliged sometimes to speak not as he really feels, but with reference to the prejudices of his opponents.'—Vol. i. p. 228.

* 'Quam artifex, quam prudens, quam dissimulator sit ejus quod agit.'—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 236.

† Augustine remonstrated against this interpretation of Jerome. 'If it be allowed, said he, to admit the existence of pious frauds in Holy Scripture, and to say that St. Paul in this place spoke contrary to what he thought, and treated St. Peter as guilty of a fault when he was really not, there is not a single passage which may not be eluded in a similar manner.'—See Epis. August. ad Hieron. 76 al. 96. De Petro reprehenso a Paulo inter Opera Hier. 4. ii. pp. 630—642.

‡ 'Nova contradictionis dispensatione.'—Ibid. pars i. p. 243.

§ 'Ut hypocrisis — correptionis hypocrisi emendaretur.' — Ibid. Fleury says (vol. ii. 62. O.E.), 'It is thought that St. Jerome yielded at last to the opinion of St. Augustine, from what he afterwards wrote, viz. that Peter himself was worthy of blame, according to St. Paul, to show that no man should think himself blameless.'— Hieron. Op. iv. pars ii. p. 498.

A. D. 366.

One scarcely knows in what terms of reprobation to speak of that license, which too many of the most eminent fathers of this century allowed themselves, when they expressed their opinions in mystic terms for expediency sake; or when they outstepped the limits of truth in the warmth of an argument; or when they indulged in exaggerated statements, rhetorical hyperbole, and bombastic flourishes, in conformity with the custom and taste of the times.

This unworthy practice has been rightly called 'Falsitas Dispensativa,' fraudulent management, or, license to conceal the truth, or to use falsehood as circumstances may require; and it has been vindicated and followed by the admirers of patristical antiquity in a manner which shews too plainly, that there is a proneness in the human mind, under fanatical excitement, to 'believe a lie.'

It was this 'Falsitas Dispensativa,' which enabled Jerome and his contemporaries to build up that structure called the church of the fourth century, so unlike 'The holy temple of the Lord fitly framed together on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.' False miracles,* dreams related in terms which led the hearers to suppose they were realities; scriptural verities withheld, under the pretext that they were too strong for

* How can we rely on any of the patristical miracles, or any testimony of the Fathers as to the miracles of the fourth century, if they felt themselves at liberty to trifle with the truth for the promotion of the Gospel?

veak brethren; church ordinances pronounced o be sacraments, when they were only of human uthority; texts of scripture misapplied, wrested, nd perverted, to suit the occasion; allegories treated as facts; opinions expressed in terms of such ambiguity as would admit of retractation or confirmation, of blowing hot or cold, in the progress of developement: these were the artifices and 'the sleight of men,' who had a system of their own to uphold, and who forgot that the fabric which has not truth for its basis, cannot be 'an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

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Such were the corruptions, and the sad errors of many of the contemporaries of Vigilantius, over

* 'One of the most seductive arguments of infidelity grounds itself on the numerous passages in the works of the Christian Fathers, asserting the lawfulness of deceit for a good purpose. That the Fathers held, almost without exception, that, "Wholly without breach of duty, it is allowed to the teachers and heads of the Christian Church to employ artifices, to intermix falsehoods with truths, and especially to deceive the enemies of the faith, provided only they hereby serve the interest of truth and the advantage of mankind," is the unwilling confession of Ribof.'—(Program. de Œconomia Patrum.) 'St. Jerome, as is shown by the citations of this learned theologian, boldly attributes this management, '*falsitatem dispensativam*,' even to the apostles themselves. But why speak I of the advantage given to the opponents of Christianity? Alas! to this doctrine chiefly, and to the practices derived from it, must we attribute the utter corruption of the religion itself for so many ages, and even now over so large a portion of the civilized world. By a system of accommodating truth to falsehood, the pastors of the church gradually changed the life and light of the Gospel into the very superstitions which they were commissioned to disperse, and thus paganised Christianity, in order to *christen* paganism. At this very hour Europe groans and bleeds in consequence.'—Coleridge's Fifth Essay in "The Friend," vol. i.

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which good men mourn, and bad men exult. It is painful to have to record such instances of human infirmity, which are in reality so many proofs of want of faith. Had the fathers of the fourth century trusted more implicitly to the great head of the church to sustain his own cause, with his own right hand, they would not have had recourse to such miserable expedients. And if 'churchmen' of the present day would not take such pains to exalt 'the church of the fathers' above that of the existing generation, we should not be under the necessity of raking up the sins of past ages.

Want of faith.

## CHAP. XII.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 396.

The religious recluse.

ɜEN we think of the self-denial of the religious luse, of his heroic command over himself, and the devoted piety, which enables him to steal m midnight and sunrise the hours which the aried body and mind would fain give to repose, our generous sympathies are with him, and we mbly and earnestly wish that our own spirit of ıyer and supplication were like his. Our hearts rm to him in his high-minded rejection of the nforts and enjoyments, which we ourselves have the fortitude to renounce; and even where we nk he goes beyond the limits of sober-minded l, we do not presume to ridicule his extravagant terities. But believing that there may be a ristian course, without any abandonment of the ial duties of life, * and that there are sound

See how some apologists of the past sneer at the present state of stian society. 'At present the *beau ideal* of a clergyman, in the of many, is "a reverend gentleman, who has a large family," "administers spiritual consolation."—'Church of the Fathers,' 57.

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church principles, apart from the practices which the holy men of the fourth century carried to excess, we think it right to give no more than a just share of commendation to their virtues, and to bring into view the errors both of the men and of the customs of that age, which has been held up to us as a model of Christian perfection.

Above all we feel it a sacred duty to show that those times, so far from being 'the holy and the happy times,'* on which we are to look back with

* 'The church of the Fathers,' as its dedicatory lines show, was composed for the purpose of exhibiting 'the holy and happy times' of the fourth century in their most attractive point of view. This little volume does certainly present to us, in their most beautiful forms, 'Whatsoever things were pure, and lovely, and of good report' in those times. But the principle on which it was written is open to this censure, that while its author sets the estimable qualities of his Christian heroes in the broadest light, he veils whatever was objectionable in their conduct and character. What would be said of a biography of John Calvin, or of John Knox, or of Oliver Cromwell, in which all the virtues of those eminent men were emblazoned, and all their faults kept out of sight; in which all the advantages of a presbyterian and republican form of government were magnified, and all its evils suppressed? A very timely and salutary exposure of the dangerous tendencies of those peculiar 'Church principles,' which the author of the 'Church of the Fathers' holds in common with some of his friends, has lately been made by Mr. Palmer, in his 'Narrative of Events connected with the publication of the Tracts for the Times, with Reflections on existing Tendencies to Romanism,' 1843. But are not Mr. Palmer's own pages in this very Narrative, and in his 'Compendious Ecclesiastical History,' to which I have referred in pp. 32—34, open to similar objections? Have not all extreme opinions and practices, under the name of 'Church principles,' a tendency to Romanism? When error is treated with unmerited tenderness, and when that, which conducts to modes of worship which the Word of God prohibits, is eulogised, is not the Church in danger? And when ascetic severities and commemorations of saints and martyrs, borrowed from heathen mythology, are commended to notice in

egret, did exhibit a want both of holiness and happiness amid the very scenes, where we are directed to seek for a spiritual paradise: and we are also bound to vindicate the character, and explain the mental progress, of a calumniated professor of Christianity like Vigilantius, who afterwards protested against proceedings, of the evil of which he had been an eye-witness. A.D. 396.

If I am judged to be too severe in my observations on the temper of Jerome, and on the dark spots of the system, as it was carried out by him and his associates at Bethlehem, let me justify myself by a reference to what the author of 'The Church of the Fathers' has himself said of the man from whom Vigilantius shrunk, and whose repulsive exhibition of the errors, of which he was the living impersonation, had its influence in deciding the future course of the wavering presbyter. The repulsive feature of the system at Bethlehem.

"A word or two about St. Jerome. I do not scruple then to say, that were he not a saint, there are things in his writings and views from which I should shrink; but as the case stands, I shrink rather from putting myself in opposition to something like a judgment of the Catholic world in favour of his saintly perfection. I cannot, indeed,

laudatory terms, without any cautionary remarks, do they not 'become the path to superstition and idolatry?'

Since this note was written, the reputed author of the 'Church of the Fathers,'—Mr. Newman,—has distinctly avowed, in a volume of '*Sermons, bearing on the subjects of the present day*,' that the tendency of the views he himself has been inculcating is towards the theology of Rome: (See note to pp, 384—386,) and has stated his consciousness, that '*the disposing cause of certain tendencies to Rome*,' has been '*portions of what he has written*.'

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force myself to approve or like against my judgment or feeling; but I can receive things in faith against both the one and the other. And I am willing to take certain characteristics of this learned and highly-gifted man on faith; and there is, perhaps, need of some exercise of this kind," &c.*

What would Vigilantius have been under other influences?

We have every reason to suppose that the character of Vigilantius was unformed when he arrived at Bethlehem; that his opinions were crude, and unsettled, and that, like many other good but unstable men, he was in a frame of mind prepared to take an impression from some master hand, capable of moulding him after its own fashion. If, instead of directing his steps to Palestine, when he left his amiable friends and patrons at Primuliac and Nola, he had gone to Milan, and there sat at the feet of Ambrose, we should then probably have heard no more of him but as a monk or a priest, in obedient submission to the "Church of the Fathers." The vigorous understanding and dignified air of Ambrose might have obtained a victory over the scruples of the Gallic presbyter. The haughty but suavid prelate, in whose person the Old and New Testaments are beautifully said to have met,† who could complete the conversion of Augustine, and bring Theodosius upon his knees, and whose successful management of the alleged miracle, at the discovery of the relics of Gervasius, and Protasius, invested him with an awful reputation of sanctity, might have found some means of removing

Under Ambrose?

* Church of the Fathers, pp. 263, 264.

† See Milman's Hist. of Christianity, vol. iii. p. 244.

ne scruples of a young Christian, who as yet was nly doubting. The gentleness and generosity which nixed so gracefully with sterner traits in the character of Ambrose, the proud humility which concealed his determination to exercise an ascendancy ver all who came within the circle of his authority, nd the captivating attractions of the sacred services vhich he introduced, as interludes, so to call them, o while away the canonical hours which hung heavily under other religious directors, might have softly rivetted the chains on Vigilantius, which Jerome ailed to secure with his hammer and anvil of iron. A. D. 396.

Or had Vigilantius been the bearer of a letter from Paulinus to Augustine, his destiny might have been different, and doubts and misgivings, which at first were reluctantly entertained, and only timidly expressed, might have given way, and shrunk into acquiescence before the supremacy of a mind like that of the bishop of Hippo. But Providence ordered it otherwise, and sent the Gallic inquirer to the cell of Jerome, instead of bringing him within the magic circle of that commanding genius, which by blending ardent devotion with deep philosophy, and adorning the most acute dialectics with graceful eloquence, has obtained triumphs which have lasted from the close of the fourth century to the present hour. Or under Augustine?

In one who was not yet the slave of the lamp, which emitted a fitful and gloomy light in the cell of bigotry and superstition (I must repeat it, even at the hazard of saying the same thing too often), the paradoxes, the acerbity, and the con- Counteraction produced by injudicious treatment.

A.D. 396. tentious spirit of Jerome produced counteraction, and Vigilantius started back like a bow too suddenly and too violently bent. Had celibacy been recommended as a state of repose and safety, he might have adopted it; but when it was exalted above all Christian virtues, and exacted as the sweetest oblation heaven could receive; and when marriage was pronounced to be an evil, to be tolerated only as a matter of necessity, he was induced to search beyond human authority, to see if these things were so. If bodily austerities and prolonged devotions had been accompanied, at Bethlehem, with composure of spirit, gentleness of demeanour, and command of temper, he might obediently and believingly have had recourse to similar acts of devotion, to secure the same blessed effects to his own mind. But many things that he witnessed there tended to make him question the wisdom and expediency of a system, which seemed to sour the spirit more and more, to render men and women insensible to all the social duties of life, to extinguish human sympathy, and to harden hearts against natural affection. For example; the praise

Paula. of Paula, mother of Eustochium, and impiously called by Jerome, the mother-in-law of God, * who had shut up her bosom against the feelings of a parent, was a favourite topic with the monks and sisterhood of Bethlehem. Paula had immortalized herself in their eyes,† by saying farewell for ever to her children, without shedding a tear, or betray-

* 'Socrus Dei.'—See Hieron. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 422.

† See ibid. p. 672.

ng the least emotion. The passage in Jerome, which describes this scene, is thought to be one of considerable beauty. It is poetical and dramatic, but the condition of mind which it pourtrays is well described by the apostle,—"without natural affection." A. D. 396.

Another proof came under the observation of Vigilantius, that the system promoted by the spiritual guides of that period had not the power to make men pre-eminently holy and happy, but tended to produce contention and strife to such an extent, as might lead the scorner to ask with bitter sarcasm, 'Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?' He saw in the occurrences which I am about to notice, which were still matters of discussion when he was in Palestine, that the professed recluse was the last person to submit to ecclesiastical authority, when it was exercised against his inclination. Jerome was an ordained priest, but in consequence of some rigid notions of his relating to the character and duties of a monk, which he maintained were in a certain degree incompatible with those of a priest, he refused to exercise the sacerdotal offices. These scruples on the part of Jerome induced him to request that his brother Paulinianus might be ordained priest, in order to minister as such within the monasteries at Bethlehem. Contentions at Bethlehem.

It does not clearly appear whether John, then bishop of Jerusalem, refused to admit Paulinianus to the priesthood; but it is certain that Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, ordained him, and thus gave offence to the prelate into whose diocese the irre- Contempt of diocesan authority.

A. D. 396. gularly-ordained priest was to be intruded. In aggravation of this uncanonical proceeding, Paulinianus himself was unwilling to be thus thrust into the priesthood; he pleaded his unfitness for the sacred office, and when he would have solemnly repeated his remonstrance at the altar, his mouth was stopped, and after his ordination he was forcibly led to the priest's stall, and compelled to take his seat there. Here then we have a priest ordained without his own free consent, ordained without a parochial charge, receiving imposition of hands from a bishop who had no authority to ordain him to a monastery at Bethlehem. Implicated in all these proceedings was Jerome. 'I do not understand,' says Tillemont very candidly, 'what Jerome means, when he says that he had done nothing to create divisions in the church.' John protested loudly and bitterly against this invasion of his episcopal jurisdiction.* He forbade the parish priests to administer the rite of baptism to the catechumens of Jerome's monastery, and laid an interdict upon the contumacious. The criminations and recriminations, and the enmities which followed, were creditable neither to John, nor to

* The apology of Epiphanius for this irregular proceeding is strongly demonstrative of the erroneous mode of reasoning by which good men too often attempt to justify what is wrong. 'You ought to rejoice, knowing that the fear of God obliged me to do it, especially considering that there is no difference in the priesthood of God, when regard is had to the good of the church; for though the bishops have every one his church, of which he takes care, and though none may encroach upon what belongs to another, yet the love of Christ, which is without dissimulation, is to be preferred to everything.'—Trans. of Fleury's Eccl. Hist. vol. i. pp. 229, 230. Oxford, 1842.

Epiphanius, nor to Jerome.* Other causes of mutual dissatisfaction widened the breach, and the letters of Jerome record some gross language used on this occasion, and some lamentable scenes, which not only disprove that those ancient times were the holiest and happiest of times, but show that monasteries, from the nature of their constitution, had a tendency to undermine episcopal authority. Who, but a person that relies upon some privileges and some fancied sanctity of his order, could reconcile himself to using such insolent language against his diocesan, as Jerome's letter to Pammachius contains, under the title of an Epistle against the errors of John, bishop of Jerusalem? And who but monkish editors would exultingly mark the offensive passages by such marginal notes as these? 'Invehitur juste in Johannem Hieronymus.' The line of conduct pursued by the two angry bishops against each other, exasperated as they were by disputes about Origen, in addition to the cause of complaint I have mentioned, was such as would be incredible, if it were not related by one, who, being deeply implicated in the quarrel, knew all the circumstances of it.

A. D. 396.

John, Bishop of Jerusalem and Epiphanius

At the very time that Epiphanius was lodged in John's house, and entertained at his table, and after they had interchanged the kiss of peace,

* 'Nosne sumus, qui ecclesiam scindimus, an ille qui vivis habitaculum, mortuis sepulcrum negat, qui fratrum exilia postulat? Quis potentissimam illam feram, totius orbis cervicibus imminentem, contra nostras cervices spiritualiter incitavit? Quis ossa Sanctorum, et innoxios cineres, hucusque verberari ab imbribus sinit?'—Hieron. Epist. ad Pam. contr. errores Joh. Hieros. Oper. vol. iv. pars ii. p. 333.

A. D. 396. their theological disputes ran so high, that at length the foreign prelate openly, and in one of the churches of Jerusalem,* (no other than that

* This is Jerome's account of the altercation, taken from an Epistle in which he addressed himself to John:—'Nos hic eramus, cuncta novimus, quando contra Origenem in Ecclesia tua Papa Epiphanius loquebatur; quando sub illius nomine in vos jacula torquebantur. Tu et chorus tuus canino rictu, naribusque contractis, scalpentes capita, delirum senem nutibus loquebamini. Nonne ante sepulcrum Domini misso Archidiacono præcepisti, ut talia disputans conticesceret? Quis hoc unquam Presbytero suo coram plebe imperavit Episcopus? Nonne quum de Anastasi pergeretis ad Crucem, et ad eum omnis ætatis et sexus turba conflueret, offerens parvulos, pedes deosculans, fimbrias vellens; quumque non posset præmovere gradum, sed in uno loco vix fluctus undantis populi sustineret, tu tortus invidia adversùs gloriosum senem clamitabas; nec erubuisti in os ei dicere, quòd volens et de industria moraretur. Recordare quæso illius diei; quando ad horam septimam invitatus populus spe sola, quasi postea auditurus Epiphanium esset, detinebatur, quid tunc concionatus sis. Nempe contra Anthropomorphitas, qui simplicitate rustica Deum habere membra, quæ in divinis Libris scripta sunt, arbitrantur, furens et indignans loquebaris: oculos et manus et totius corporis truncum, in senem dirigebas, volens illum suspectum facere stultissimæ hæreseos. Postquam lassus, ore arido, resupinaque cervice ac trementibus labiis conticuisti, et tandem totius populi vota completa sunt, quid tibi fecit delirus et fatuus senex? Surrexit, ut se indicaret pauca dicturum esse, salutataque et voce et manu Ecclesia, "Cuncta (inquit) quæ loquutus est collegio frater, ætate filius meus, contra Anthropomorphitarum hæresim, bene et fideliter loquutus est, quæ mea quoque damnatur voce. Sed æquum est, ut quomodo hanc hæresim condemnamus, etiam Origenis perversa dogmata condemnemus." Qui risus omnium, quæ acclamatio consequuta sit, puto quòd retineas.'—Oper. Hier. vol. iv. pars ii. pp. 312, 313.

'You (i.e. John, Bishop of Jerusalem) have imposed upon strangers. We were present, and know the whole truth. When the Pope Epiphanius spoke in your church against Origen, and under his name attacked you, you and your company made it sufficiently appear by your looks, and your contemptuous gestures, that you considered him a mere dotard. Did you not, before the Sepulchre of the Lord, send to him your archdeacon, bidding him cease to speak in that strain?

A.D. 396.

Disgraceful scene in the church of the Holy Sepulchre.

of the holy sepulchre) insinuated that John was an Origenist. John, in retaliation, treated Epiphanius as an old dotard, laughed aloud at him, and ordered his archdeacon to go and tell him to be silent. This scene was followed by another equally disgraceful. Alas! the sanctuaries built on the spot where some of the most awful events of Christ's incarnation had taken place, had but little effect in softening the hearts of these angry rivals! Epiphanius was followed whithersoever he went by a crowd of votaries, who in admiration of his reputed sanctity, brought children to be blessed by him, kissed his feet, and plucked the borders of his garments. This excited the jealousy of John, who lost his temper so far as to cry out, in

What bishop ever so treated his priest before the people? And when, as you proceeded from the place of the resurrection to that of the cross, a multitude of people, of every age and sex, ran up to him, presenting to him children, kissing his feet, plucking the border of his mantle, so that you could not advance, and even had difficulty in standing, your envy for the holy old man's glory made you cry out to his face, that it was on purpose that he stopped. Call to mind, I pray you, the day when the people waited till an hour after mid-day only with the hope of hearing Epiphanius. You spoke like a madman against the Anthropomorphites, who with a rude simplicity believe that God has, in a literal sense, the members which the Scriptures attribute to him; and you turned your hands, your eyes, and your whole body towards the holy old man, with the wish to render him suspected of this absurd heresy. After you had spoken, he rose to show his wish to say something, and, after saluting the assembly with voice and hand, he said, "All that my brother has pronounced against the Anthropomorphites is good, and conformable to the faith, and I, too, condemn them; as, however, we condemn this heresy, it is right that we also condemn the evil doctrine of Origen." What bursts of laughter, what cries immediately arose! surely you must remember them.'—Translation of Fleury's Eccl. Hist. book xix. 45. vol. i. p. 234. Ed. Oxford, 1842.

A. D. 396. the hearing of all the people, that Epiphanius was courting popularity. The quarrel between Epiphanius and John was the natural but disgraceful consequence of that want of Christian charity and ecclesiastical obedience,* which prevailed in the church at this period of its history.† Epiphanius left Jerusalem abruptly and full of resentment, and it is but due to Jerome and the fraternity at Bethlehem to state, that they did all in their power to effect a reconciliation. At their persuasion Epiphanius returned to Jerusalem, for the purpose of coming to a better understanding with John; but this interview seems to have widened the breach, for a second time he went away in anger, and with such precipitation that having reached the city in the evening, he quitted it again at midnight. His next step will scarcely

* 'In Asia Minor the church was almost without form and void.' Church of the Fathers, p. 90. 'What is most melancholy of all, even the portion among us which seems to be sound is divided in itself.'—Basil's Letter to Bishops of Gaul and Italy. See ibid. p. 108. 'The name of the episcopate has at length attached to wretched men, the slaves of slaves, none of the servants of God choosing to make himself their rivals, none but the abandoned.'—Epist. Bas. 239. Ibid. ibid. Were these the times to be called 'ancient, holy, and happy?'

† I refer the reader to Jerome's own account of these proceedings. See Epist. ad Pam. 38 aliter 61, adversus errores Joh. Hieros. Oper. Hier. vol. iv. p. ii. pp. 306—334. Jerome's notions of the deference due from a presbyter to a bishop were never very strict. 'Nihil interest inter Presbyterum et Episcopum.'—Ibid. p. 330. 'Ut deferamus Episcopis ut Episcopis, et non sub nomine alterius, aliis quibus nolumus servire cogamur.'——'Sed contenti sint honore suo. Patres se sciant esse, non dominos, maxime apud eos qui spretis ambitionibus sæculi, nihil quieti et otio præferunt.'—Ad Theophilum. Epist. 39 aliter 62. Ibid. p. 339.

admit of justification. He wrote to John insisting upon a public acknowledgment of his alleged errors as an Origenist, and when this was refused on the part of that prelate, Epiphanius proceeded to advise all the monastic establishments in the diocese of Jerusalem, over which he had any influence, to separate from their communion with John. Jerome and the monks of Bethlehem followed this pernicious advice, and within six miles of the seat of authority, and in the birth-place of the Prince of Peace, exhibited the disgraceful spectacle of schism and rebellion.

A. D. 396.

The monks of Bethlehem declare against their bishop.

Whatever might be the errors of John of Jerusalem in the eyes of Jerome and his confraternity, that bishop was held by others in such high estimation, that Pope Anastasius, in the year 402, addressed a letter to John, in which he treated him with great respect, and declared that the glory of his pontificate was spread throughout the whole world.*

* Fleury's Eccl. Hist. 20, 52.

## CHAP. XIII.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 396. Vigilantius in Jerusalem.

FROM Bethlehem, Vigilantius went to Jerusalem before he finally took leave of Jerome; and it was in this interval that he acquired courage enough to make some show of opposition to the Master, whose authority none ever ventured to dispute, without incurring his severest displeasure.

The character of the Gallic presbyter has not yet opened out, so as to give us any opportunity of pronouncing upon it confidently. We are not yet upon any traces indicating that sanctity of life and conversation, which we should expect to discover in a man called 'Holy,' by one of his most eminent contemporaries; neither have we found marks of the energy necessary to qualify the controversialist for a contest with the redoubtable Jerome. A combination of circumstances acted upon Vigilantius by degrees, brought out his dormant talents and spirit, and thrust him upon an arena where at first he performed a very imperfect part. I have supposed throughout the whole

of this volume that Vigilantius was moulded by events, and that Providence ordained that he should take his form and pressure from the times, in an obverse figure. In all this I recognise the power of God; for it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" And, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." * I gather from Jerome's letter to Vigilantius, and from the "Invectives of Rufinus" against Jerome, and Jerome's reply to them, that Vigilantius paid a visit to Rufinus at Jerusalem in the course of this year, and was commissioned to make some communication to, and to discuss some subject of common interest with, that distinguished polemic. It was not unlikely that he was also the bearer of a message or a letter from Paulinus to Rufinus, between whom there then existed the closest friendship. A. D. 396.

A sojournment in Jerusalem, towards the close of the fourth century, was more likely than anything else, to make an unfavourable impression

* 1 Cor. i. 19, 20, 27, 28.

A. D. 396.

upon an unsettled mind, not yet reconciled to those appliances, to which it had been taught to have recourse, to confirm its faith and strengthen its hopes.

The holy city.

Jerusalem, 'the holy city,' Jerusalem, consecrated by the most awful events that ever took place on earth; Jerusalem, where every footstep was supposed to be planted on sacred ground! where every object was felt to be associated with holy recollections, hopes, and fears; where the eye could not rest on plain or slope, on hill or valley, on glen or mountain, without bringing before it visions of rapture! The pulse quickens and the heart beats at the thought of Jerusalem. A devout transport takes possession of the whole man, as he enters its venerable walls. He expects that the air he breathes, the sounds he hears, the objects on which he gazes, will all partake of the sanctity of the place. It is holy ground; he must take the shoes from off his feet, he must tread softly, he must speak in whispers, he must lift up his heart to his Redeemer. If he does not do so, he has a heart of stone, for certainly every true Christian in Jerusalem must be fervent in spirit there, if nowhere else.

Doubtless these were the feelings of Vigilantius. His beloved Paulinus had once expressed an anxious wish to live and die in Jerusalem; and a pilgrimage to the holy city was the aspiration of all devout men: because it was believed to give a foretaste of the holy rest reserved for the people of God, after their labours are over, and when their

good works shall follow them into the presence of the Eternal. The martyrs, the confessors, the most pious bishops of every age, had resorted thither, believing that the defects in their religious knowledge and practice could not be supplied except at Jerusalem, and that they must worship in Christ's footsteps, if they would experience the ardour of real devotion. Jerusalem, in the glowing language of the age, was not watered like Egypt from below, but from above; it was moistened with the dew of heaven; and as Judea was more excellent than all other provinces of the earth, so was Jerusalem far more excellent than the most revered spots in other parts of Judea. A. D. 396.

To lie prostrate before the very cross on which Christ suffered; to fancy you see the Saviour suspended upon it; to enter the sepulchre where his body lay; to kiss the stone that was rolled away by angels at the resurrection; to be in that upper room where the Holy Ghost descended on the hundred and twenty! * Who could be thus favoured, without drinking deeply and more deeply of the waters of life, and being purified body and soul? But when Vigilantius arrived at Jerusalem, did he experience all that his fancy had anticipated? Did he find it the abode of the good only? And were the good made better within the hallowed precincts of Jerusalem?

There are no writings of the Gallic presbyter remaining, to tell us what were his disappoint-

* It was the belief of that day, that all these were yet to be seen. See Epist. 86. Hier. ad Eustochium 4. pp. 673, 674.

A. D. 396.

Jerusalem at the end of the fourth century.

ments when he visited Jerusalem, saving the short sentence which has been preserved in reference to the uselessness of pilgrimages to the holy city. But Jerome, in the same year in which Vigilantius gratified his desire of adding one more to the number of pilgrims who crowded to Jerusalem, spoke of it thus: 'Soldiers and harlots, mimics and buffoons, and everything else that swarms in other cities swarms here. It is full of all sorts of people, and you are so annoyed by multitudes of both sexes, that what you may escape elsewhere, you are forced to endure here.' * I will not pollute my pages with a name which Jerome did not hesitate to apply to Jerusalem.

Who can wonder then, that Vigilantius was first disappointed and afterwards disgusted at Jerusalem; and that he learnt to detest the thought of pilgrimages, on the scene which he saw polluted by vice, though it was said to be the gathering-place of all who were pre-eminent for piety from every part of the world. 'Hither came converts from the dark mysteries of Druidism, from Gaul and Britain; Armenia, Persia, and India sent

* 'Si crucis et resurrectionis loca non essent in urbe celeberrima, in qua curia, in qua aula militum, in qua scorta, mimi, scurræ, et omnia sunt, quæ solent in cæteris urbibus, vel si Monachorum turbis solummodo frequentaretur, expetendum re vera hujuscemodi cunctis Monachis esset habitaculum. Nunc vero summæ stultitiæ est renunciare sæculo, dimittere patriam, urbes deserere, Monachum profiteri, et inter majores populos peregre vivere, quàm eras victurus in patria. De toto huc orbe concurritur. Plena est civitas universi generis hominum: et tanta utriusque sexus constipatio, ut quod alibi ex parte fugiebas, hic totum sustinere cogaris.'—Hier. Epist. ad Paul. 13 alias 49. Op. 4. p. ii. p. 565.

hither the most ardent of those who had before kissed their hand to the luminaries of heaven; from Ethiopia and Egypt came worshippers, whose hearts it was as hard to change as their colour; Pontus, Cappadocia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the farthest East poured out the choicest of their population into Jerusalem, there to exhibit piety in its various forms.'* Such was the glowing account given by two of Jerome's disciples. The sad scenes described in the preceding chapter, when John bishop of Jerusalem, and St. Epiphanius inveighed against each other with so much virulence, were exhibited not only within the walls, but within the holiest sanctuaries of the holy city. What reliance then can be placed on the efficacy of pilgrimages to holy places to remove asperities and to soften human hearts, when the very persons whose names are handed down to us, as having been most eminent for their sanctity, railed at each other with more than ordinary bitterness, under the shadow of the awful hills of Calvary and Olivet?

A. D. 396.

The furious animosities, caused by the fatal Origenist controversy, were still the subject of angry conversation, when Vigilantius was at Jerusalem; and he himself could not escape being implicated in the dispute which was then dividing very friends. In fact, Origenism, and the part taken by the Gallic stranger, in the quarrel, which, like an epidemic disorder, infected every one who

The Origenist controversy, and its consequences.

* 'Diversarum nobis virtutum specimen ostenderunt.'—Epist. Paul. ad Marcel. Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 551.

A. D. 396. sojourned in Palestine at this period, produced the first estrangement between him and Jerome. It is necessary therefore to give a short account of this controversy. The works of Origen contain doctrinal errors, which are summed up under eight heads.

1. That the Son of God does not see the Father, and the Holy Ghost does not see the Son.

2. That the souls of men were once angels in heaven, and were committed to mortal bodies, as a punishment for their sins.

3. That Satan and the fallen angels will repent, and will be permitted to reign with the saints in heaven.

4. That Adam and Eve were incorporeal before the fall, and that the skins, wherein they were said to be clothed, were their bodies.

5. That man will not rise in the body.

6. That the paradise on earth was only allegorical of heaven.

7. That the waters above the firmament were angels; and the waters below were evil spirits.

8. That the image of God in man was effaced by sin.

About the year 392, John, Bishop of Jerusalem was accused by St. Epiphanius of holding these errors of Origen: and Rufinus of Aquileia and Palladius, both of whom were then residing in Palestine, were also said to maintain the same tenets. Strong party feeling was excited upon the occasion, and men of the highest eminence took one side or the other. Jerome espoused the

cause of Epiphanius, and was most vehement against those who were accused of Origenism, especially against John, whom he contemptuously called '*haud grandis homunculus*,' and Rufinus, who had once been his intimate friend. Angry discussion led to retort and recrimination, and, to use Tillemont's expression, Jerome became '*the enemy*' of Rufinus. One *Christian* the *enemy* of another! Could it be so, in that age of saints, to which we are now directed to look for the very perfection of Christian wisdom and virtue? Alas, how frequently is the biographical page of the Fathers of the fourth century stained with similar spots. The author, whom I have just cited, with all his tenderness for Jerome, speaks thus of the quarrel between our monk and his antagonists, "It is provoking that St. Jerome himself acknowledges that he separated himself from the communion of his bishop, without knowing if he were culpable, without any judgment having been pronounced against him, and on a mere suspicion founded on an accusation made by St. Epiphanius, who, however holy he might be, did not always sufficiently consider what he did, and what he said. And he acted afterwards, with regard to St. John Chrysostom, nearly in the same manner in which he had acted towards John of Jerusalem.'*

A. D. 396.

* 'Il est fascheux que S. Jerome avoue luy mesme par là qu'il s'estoit séparé de la communion de son Evesque sans savoir s'il estoit coupable, sans qu'il y eust eu aucun jugement rendu contre luy, et sur un simple soupçon fondé sur ce qu'il estoit accusé par Saint Epiphane, qui, quelque saint qu'il fust, n'examinoit pas toujours assez ce qu'il

A. D. 396.

The scandal attached to the Origenist controversy became greater for the reason, that Jerome had formerly laid himself open to the imputation of leaning to some of those opinions which he now assailed with the utmost fury, and Rufinus naturally took advantage of this, and charged his opponent with inconsistency and apostacy.

Rufinus.

At the very crisis when the flame, which these disputes had kindled, was burning with undiminished violence,* Vigilantius became personally acquainted with Rufinus, who was then living in Jerusalem with the venerable Melania.

Rufinus, whatever may have been his theological errors and controversial asperity, was, like Jerome himself, a man whose purity of conduct, out of the polemical arena, was never questioned. Even while he and his great rival were raging against each other like two wild beasts, Paulinus spoke of him, as 'a most learned, pious, and holy man, for whom he entertained the warmest affection.'† His erudition, diligence, and zeal in promoting sacred literature, commended him to the respect of his contemporaries; but, unhappily,

faisoit, et ce qu'il disoit: et il agit depuis à l'égard de S. Jean Chrysostome à peu près de la manière qu'il avait agi à l'égard de Jean de Jerusalem.'—Tillemont, tom. xii. p. 185.

* In vain were many attempts made to reconcile the contending parties in this spiritual warfare. Theophilus, Archbishop of Alexandria, sent Isidore, a priest of some celebrity, to act as mediator; and Archelaus ('Comes Christianissimus et disertissimus,' see Hier. Op. 4, 331.) undertook the same office, but ineffectually.

† 'Vere sanctum et pie doctum, et ob hoc intimâ mihi affectione conjunctum.'—Epist. Paul. 9 aliter 28. 'Sancto doctissimo viro, et carissimo mihi.'—Ibid. 26 aliter 40.

when he involved himself in disputation, he sacrificed every consideration to the desire of enjoying a triumph over his adversary.* A. D. 396.

The writings of Rufinus were very voluminous, comprising translations of Josephus, Origen, and Eusebius, with many original compositions historical, theological, and polemical. In the latter he took especial delight, and because Vigilantius made his acquaintance when his spirit was chafed, we may readily believe that Jerome was not wrong in imputing to Rufinus† the first seeds of the open quarrel betwixt himself and the presbyter of Aquitain. Vigilantius had seen enough of the weak side of Jerome to turn a willing ear to all that was said against him, and I will now take the same liberty, on which I ventured in one of my preceding chapters, and recount, in the form of a dialogue, the reasons which existed for bringing a charge of self-contradiction and inconsistency against the recluse of Bethlehem.

Vigilantius is prejudiced against Jerome by Rufinus.

The materials with which the following dialogue is constructed will be found in the 'Invectives of Rufinus,' and in the 'Apology' and admissions of Jerome, in answer to those invectives.‡ Fleury, Du Pin, and Tillemont may be cited in confirmation of the interpretation which I have put on those historical documents.

* Tillemont in one place speaks of the irreproachable life of Rufinus; in another, of his artifices and falsehood. So difficult is it to decide between religious polemics.

† Vide Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 457.

‡ Ibid. pp. 339—473.

A. D. 396.

*Vigilantius.* What caused this quarrel between you and Jerome? You were once intimate friends; your friends are his friends, and you are still in the enjoyment of their esteem, while you are estranged from him.

*Rufinus.* Very true, the time was when we were united together in the closest friendship. He used to address me as his dearest Rufinus,* and to tell me how he longed to embrace me.† He was not satisfied with common modes of expression, but he employed the language of poetry and scripture,‡ in the excess of his affection, to express the esteem he felt for me. In a letter to Florentius, written, it is true, many years ago, after praising my virtue and *sanctity*,§ he spoke of himself as if he were not worthy to be compared with me.‖ I, in return, entertained the same love and respect for him.¶ I praised his learning and his eloquence in perfect sincerity, and I cannot accuse myself of having given him any personal cause of offence, before this Origenist question was agitated. But now I am a heretic, and a

* 'Rufine charissime.'—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 1.

† 'Quàm ego nunc tua arctis stringerem colla complexibus.'—Ibid. ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 2.

§ The terms '*sanctus*' and '*sanctitas*' were sadly abused in the conversation and correspondence of those times. They became ordinary conventional civilities, and had little more meaning in them than the expressions of courtesy now in use amongst ourselves.

‖ 'Et ego cinis et vilissima pars luti, etiam favilla dum vertor, satis habeo, si spendorem morum illius imbecillitas oculorum meorum ferre sustineat.'—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 4.

¶ Ibid. p. 449.

blasphemer, and a liar, and everything that is bad, because we differ in our opinions of Origen. A. D. 396.

*Vigilantius.* But did he not formerly entertain and express sentiments which implied an admiration of Origen?

*Rufinus.* Certainly he did, and therefore I cannot but feel provoked to think that he should now be one of the fiercest of my assailants, and that he should judge me with so much severity upon a subject, on which he himself was once open to censure. I believe the works of Origen have been corrupted, or at least misunderstood, and it is my intention to write a treatise in vindication of him. Many passages in Origen are obscure, but I am persuaded they may be reconciled with what he has said elsewhere, in strict conformity with the Catholic faith.*

*Vigilantius.* I have read some of the Homilies of Origen, translated by Jerome, and in the preface to one of them, Jerome speaks of the author in terms of high commendation. Does he not say that Origen excelled himself in his Canticles, as he had excelled every body else in his other books?†

*Rufinus.* Yes, and he has gone so far as to call Origen the second doctor in the church after the Apostles.‡ I am therefore compelled to say, that it argues malevolence in Jerome to be treating me

* See Præfatio Rufini in Libros περὶ ἀρχῶν Origenis, apud Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 339.

† 'Origenes quum in cæteris libris omnes vicerit, in Cantica Canticorum ipse se vicit.'—Hier. Op. 2. p. 807.

‡ Ibid. 4. pars ii. pp. 340, 376.

A. D. 396. as if I were an heretic, whereas I have no more offended against the true faith, by my praise of Origen, than he has. My belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is as pure as his own.* My belief in the resurrection of the body, and in the glorious change from a mortal to an immortal state, has been openly avowed by me on all occasions.

*Vigilantius*. So then you are agreed upon essential points, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, and yet you are at variance beyond all hope of reconciliation. These doctrinal discussions seem to be sadly destructive of mutual charity;† and you disputants are opposing or advocating doctrines to-day on which you were doubtful yesterday. If you and Jerome stir yourselves up to enmity on topics of inferior moment, while you are consentient on those which are necessary to salvation, will you not injure the cause of Christianity! How am I to discern the truth, when men of the highest theological reputation, like Jerome and Rufinus, revile each other as heretics?

*Rufinus*. I have been ill-used by Jerome; but I can show that if I have fallen into some mis-

* Rufinus published an Exposition of the Creed which Gennadius commended, and Du Pin pronounced to be a treatise so complete, that it would be hard to find a better. See Du Pin Nouv. Bib. des Aut. Eccl. vol. 3, p. 469.

† See what Augustine says on this subject, Epist. 73 aliter 15. Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 617. 'Quis denique amicus non formidatur, quasi futurus inimicus, si potuit inter Hieronymum et Rufinum hoc quod plangimus exoriri? O misera et miseranda conditio.'

takes, he has not kept clear either of error or of self-contradiction, in regard to Origen. A. D. 396.

*Vigilantius.* On what other points do you consider that he has stumbled? For, I confess, that my faith in his judgment has been shaken lately, and that I am much less persuaded in my own mind upon some subjects on which he is very earnest, than I was before I came to Palestine. On others too I have been taught by his example to think for myself. Jerome's freedom with the books of Holy Writ has directed me to consult the Word of God, before I subscribe to any man's dogmas.

*Rufinus.* You are right, no man has taken greater liberties with sacred subjects than Jerome. He has presumed to set up an authority of his own, and to flourish the censor's rod over every body's head. Lactantius, Hilary, Didymus, Ambrose, all come under his lash, as if none but himself could pronounce what are the correct and authentic passages of Revelation, or discern between Catholic faith and error.*

*Vigilantius.* Just so; he has advanced opinions which would be called heresy in others. I have often been startled by the vehemence with which he has expressed himself in praise of celibacy, and in abhorrence of matrimony. It is difficult to condemn the language used by the Marcionites, and the Manichees, in their strictures on wedlock, and at the same time to approve of that of

* Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 442.

A. D. 396. Jerome.* Nor do I find it easy to condemn the Aerians, for asserting that there is no difference between bishops and presbyters, and to say that Jerome is orthodox, when he makes declarations to the same effect.† I cannot consent to receive all the dogmas of a man, who is so rash and unguarded in his assertions; and I am almost at a loss what sentiments or conduct to adopt, when I remember how frequently he exposes himself to the charge of inconsistency in the heat of an argument, and in the fierceness of his resentment against an adversary. Who can be said to be right on those questions, which now divide the church, if Jerome, with all his erudition and piety, can rush into so many contradictions?

*Rufinus.* Jerome accuses me of embracing the erroneous tenets of Origen. Now I am able to show that in passages, where he would be expected to declare his own opinions, he has committed himself: on the state of the soul, of the devil and of the fallen angels; on universal redemption;‡ and on other matters also he has subscribed to the very errors which he has blamed in Origen.§ I can also expose his audacity and his

* See Epist. Hieron. 30 aliter 50, 31 aliter 52 ad Pam.

† 'Nihil interest inter Presbyterum et Episcopum; eadem dignitas mittentis et missi.'—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 330.

‡ Jerome's opinions, however, expressed in his Commentary on Isaiah, are the reverse of Origen's.—Vide Hier. Op. 3. pp. 212, 227, 515.

§ Vide Invectivarum Libr. Rufin. in Hier. Du Pin discusses the subject of these 'Invectives' at considerable length. He admits that Jerome's Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians reproduces Origen's remarks on the Resurrection, on the Pre-existence of

perjury, in having pretended to make a vow before God and his angels never to read profane authors again, whereas to this present hour he takes every opportunity of vaunting his knowledge of heathen literature.* A. D. 396.

*Vigilantius.* These are the things which make me distrust the judgment of Jerome more and more; and I begin to have my doubts upon many points which he pressed upon my attention with his usual warmth. The principal subjects of his conversation were the virtue and the necessity of fasting, austerities, mortifications, seclusion, and vigils at the sepulchres of the dead. He talked as if he thought monks and hermits were the especial favourites of heaven, and had miraculous gifts granted to them, because they were monks and hermits. I cannot reconcile his extravagant tales of wonder,† with the grave and sober language of scripture, and I marvel how a Biblical student, who has passed his life in translating and explaining the word of God, can devote himself to the contemplation of miracles, so totally unlike

Souls, and on the final Pardon of Satan, without objecting to them: that in his Commentary on Nahum, Jerome maintains that God will not punish the Antediluvians in another world; that in his remarks on the Prodigal he teaches that angels may sin; that in his Treatise on the Book of Ecclesiastes he affirms that the sun and the stars have souls; and that he ventures, in other places, to advance opinions, which he rejects when he is combating Origen. See Nouv. Bib. des Aut. Ec. 3. 451.

* Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. pp. 383, 404, 420, 454—6.

† 'St. Jerome raconte de quelle manière il (St. Paul, ermite) fut visité par S. Antoine, et il rapporte des circonstances de cette histoire qui sont fort peu croyables.'—Du Pin, Nouv. Bib. des Aut. Ec. 3. p. 371.

A. D. 396. those of the Old and New Testament, and therefore so hard to be believed.*

*Rufinus.* You have more reason to be dissatisfied with his perversion of Scripture. Has he not said in his Commentary on Habakkuk, that God has not a distinct knowledge of all events that take place in the world? Has he not ventured to assert that all oaths are unlawful? † Has he not proclaimed that Christians are not under any obligation to pay tribute to heathen princes? ‡ Nay, has he not taken upon himself to declare that in some cases suicide may be justified? §

*Vigilantius.* If this be Jerome's freedom with the text and sense of scripture, why may not I suggest a new construction of some passages of holy writ, without offending against the Christian faith, even though I may not have all the Fathers of the church with me. I have heard him speak in disapprobation of those devout Christians who bind parchments containing sentences of the gospel

* See Hieron. Vita S. Pauli Eremitæ. et Vita S. Hilarionis Eremitæ.

† 'Evangelica autem veritas non recipit Juramentum.'—Com. in Mat. c. 5.

‡ 'Nos pro illius honore tributa non reddimus, et quasi filii regis a vectigalibus immunes sumus.'—Vide Com. in Mat. c. 17.

§ 'Unde et in persecutionibus non licet propria manu perire, absque eo ubi castitas periclitatur.'—Vide Com. in Jon. Prop. c. 1. Jerome replied to the accusations and invectives of Rufinus, first in a letter addressed to Pammachius and Oceanus, and afterwards in an apology or vindication of himself, dedicated to Pammachius and Marcella. These are very acute and vigorous, but unsatisfactory. In the first he declared, that in praising Origen he praised the Interpreter, not the Dogmatist; the man's genius, not his faith; the philosopher, and not the apostle.—(Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. 362.) This epistle contains a specimen of those subtilties and sophistries, and of those dis-

about their necks and arms, and call it a Pharisaical practice;* but I believe he would be very hot against me, if I were to express an opinion against the veneration of relics. You confirm me in some of my doubts and misgivings, and have taught me to think less highly of Jerome, than I did when I brought away with me so many predilections in his favour from Primuliac and Nola.

A. D. 396.

gusting definitions and references to the mysteries of physiology, which have since distinguished the Romish school of divinity. I allude especially to the passage beginning 'Credimus, inquiunt,' and ending 'dicunt non resurgere.'—(Ibid. p. 344.) Jerome's last answer to Rufinus was so unworthy of a Christian, that the Benedictine editors felt themselves constrained to notice its unbecoming language. 'We must remember,' say they, 'that although Jerome was very learned, and a saint, yet he was still a man.'—(p. 445.) 'The Invectives,' and 'The Apology,' are two works which are a disgrace to Christian literature. I ask again, Were those angry, fierce, and fiery spirits the exemplars of ancient times? Was that the holy and happy epoch of Christianity, when two men, said to be of irreproachable morals, could revile each other in such language, as we find in these remains of Christian antiquity?'—(See pp. 439, 440, 442.) And the worst of it is, that this style of railing and abusive controversy has been imitated and defended in after times, under colour of its being justifiable, because the saints of old practised it.

* 'Hoc apud nos superstitiosæ mulierculæ, in parvis Evangeliis, et in crucis ligno, et in istiusmodo rebus, quæ habent quidem zelum Dei, sed non juxta scientiam, usque hodie factitant.'—Vide Com. in Mat. c. 23.

## CHAP. XIV.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 396.

Jerusalem the scene of contention and superstition.

THE scenes which Vigilantius witnessed in Jerusalem had a powerful effect upon his mind. What could be more abhorrent from the pure and gentle principles of the gospel, than the contentious spirit which raged within those sacred precincts, unrestrained by the daily and hourly observances which were scrupulously followed by the pilgrims and religious there? * What were the captious sophistries, and the artificial theories, and the labyrinths of questions raised by angry disputants, doing for Christianity? They were paganising it. What was the system of satisfactions and of bodily sufferings doing for the mind? Exasperating it, and

* The discord, which is now pronounced to be the shameful note of the Anglican Church, prevailed in the fourth century to a much more scandalous extent in Jerusalem. 'Where is our unity, for which Christ prayed? Where is our charity, which he enjoined?' 'Our very note and symbol is discord; and we wrangle and denounce, and call it life; but peace we know not, nor faith, nor love.'—Newman's Sermons on the Subjects of the Day. No. XXII. 'Outward and Inward Notes of the Church.'

puffing it up. What were the veneration of relics, and the reverence shown for deceased martyrs and confessors, and the blind deference paid to living saints (to use a term which has been so miserably abused), doing for the household of God? They were shaking it to the very foundations; they were bringing in imaginary or questionable guides in the place of the apostles and prophets; and were substituting other names than that of Christ, through which health and salvation were to be sought. A. D. 396.

Oh! had the name and the example of Jesus been as much before the Christians of this period, as in primitive times, and had the doctrines of Peter, and John, and James, and Paul constituted the teaching of the church then; and had men been satisfied with the ever-present miracle of the enlargement of the kingdom of the Messiah, and the fulfilment of the divine promises; the stranger from the Pyrenees would not have had to gaze on the disgraceful dramas which were performed at Jerusalem.

But the intercession of some obscure and apocryphal Felix, or Thecla, instead of the sure and prevailing mediation of the Son of God,—the worse than Ovidian fables of the pretended cross,—the metamorphoses of Anthony and Martin,—and the dreams or impostures of Ambrose and other relic-hunters,—instead of the stupendous miracles of the resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost;—the exaggerated and fanciful histories of hermits in Egypt and the deserts of Syria,—in-

A. D. 396. stead of the veritable Acts of the Apostles,—these figments were ever in men's mouths, even at the Holy Sepulchre; consequently the standard of morality and of piety was lowered with that of the truth; and Jerusalem displayed an humiliating and disgusting mixture of individual vice and malevolence, with professions of superhuman sanctity. Such must ever be the case where credulity takes the place of reasonable faith, and dependence on self-infliction is substituted for reliance on the all-sufficient sacrifice and satisfaction of the Redeemer.

Before I proceed, an anecdote must be noticed, which Jerome has recorded in ridicule of our Gallic presbyter.

Earthquake in Palestine. An eclipse of the sun,* accompanied by an earthquake, took place while Vigilantius was in Palestine, and most probably in Jerusalem. Every body was alarmed; it was thought that the end of the world was at hand, and that the Lord was coming to judgment. The shock of the earthquake was felt at night, and in the panic of the moment, Vigilantius rushed from his bed, without putting on his clothes, flung himself upon his knees, and in an agony of terror poured out his supplications for divine protection.

Jerome's account of its effects on Vigilantius. Jerome's version of this story, contained in a letter written many years afterwards to Vigilantius, is ill-natured and sarcastic. "When a sudden earthquake felt in this province roused all from their sleep at midnight, you, in your prudence and

* Fleury says this event happened in the year 393; but Tillemont's reasons for assigning it to the year 396 are satisfactory.

wisdom fell upon your knees in prayer, naked as you were born, and put us in mind of Adam and Eve in paradise. But they blushed when they were conscious of their nakedness, and covered themselves with leaves of trees, whereas you, equally bare as regarded faith and dress, half-dead with fear, and carrying nothing about you but the remains of the preceding evening's debauch, exposed your body indecently, shocked all the saints who witnessed it, and gave this proof of your discretion. A fine specimen art thou, of those who contend against the blood of the martyrs." * A. D. 396.

It is not easy to extract from this account any great cause of complaint against Vigilantius. He participated in the terror common to all, for in another place, Jerome tells us that everybody was equally afraid (obscurato sole omnis mundus jamjamque venturum judicem formidaret); † and in the hurry of his alarm, he had not time, or he forgot to dress himself. No great harm in this. And he was seen praying—was that a subject for ridicule? Examination of this account.

Jerome's allusion to Adam and Eve is somewhat profane; and his insinuation that Vigilantius was intoxicated the day before this event is unsupported by any evidence whatever. On the contrary it bears the mark of being nothing more than a scurrilous charge suggested by the indignation of the moment. Jerome makes no mention of it

* Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 286.

† Epist. 61. ad Pam. Hier. Oper. 4. pars ii. p. 333.

A.D. 396.

in his letter to Paulinus, wherein he complains of the sudden and unfriendly departure of Vigilantius from Bethlehem; none in the two epistles addressed to Paulinus in the years 397 and 398; none in his first letter of complaint to Vigilantius; and none in his bitter epistle to Riparius, which was full of invective, and written two years before the treatise which first contained the account.

But let us take Jerome at his word, and allow that Vigilantius had been indulging in some excess the night before, and that his terror was increased by a sense of his unworthiness. Was this a matter for scorn and irony? He was seen upon his knees in the hour of remorse and alarm, and may not this have been one of those events in the dealings of a gracious Providence, which act powerfully upon the conscience; one of those moments in which the soul is struggling between the conflicting interests of time and eternity? We are willing to regard the terrified Gaul as an offender, exclaiming in the agony of impending death, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" We will believe that in the jar of elements, one soul conscious of guilt, began to look within itself, and to say, "Where is now my hope?" "In what have I been putting my trust for peace and reconciliation?" And this was Vigilantius. We will believe that in the anguish of his heart he had recourse to God and the Redeemer, as the only Saviour; that he then felt that there was none other name under heaven given among men whereby he might be saved; that there was no prevailing intercessor,

The real impression left on the mind of Vigilantius by this earthquake.

and none to help him, but the living God; that saints and pilgrims were all subject to the same judgment; that neither relic, nor shrine, nor martyr's grave, could afford security in the hour of peril; and that Jerusalem, yea, the holy sepulchre itself, was no place of refuge, and could yield no balm to the wounds of a troubled conscience. Therefore we hesitate not to mark the time of the earthquake at Jerusalem as a turning-point in the history of Vigilantius. A. D. 396.

In the midst of the contentions which disgraced Palestine, or to use Tillemont's words, "In the midst of the spiritual war" which the commotions of nature, the eclipse and the earthquake did not put an end to, another war caused by an irruption of barbarians from the North made the whole East tremble with alarm; but neither did this pacify the animosities which rankled in the hearts of Christian polemics. In the birth-place of the Prince of Peace, and on the mount of Olives, from whence it was believed that Christ had ascended into heaven, to plead the blood of his atonement, and to reconcile man to his offended Father, even there did they rend each other with the ferocity of wild beasts, at the terrible juncture when a horde of barbarians were rushing upon the defenceless hills and dales of Palestine and Syria. Instead of those miserable encounters, why did they not fall upon each other's necks, mutually confess their provocations, and implore forgiveness! A short but hollow truce did indeed take place be- The terrors produced by the invasion of the Huns did not put an end to the contentions in Palestine.

A.D. 396. tween Jerome and Rufinus,* but they soon assailed each other again with unabated violence. Jerome, who was honest in every thing, honest in his acknowledgments as well as in his affections and enmities, confessed the full extent of this evil. "There were such dissensions among us," said he, "that though the Huns were upon us from the North, and the whole East was trembling with alarm; though the enemy were thundering at the very gates of Jerusalem; and vessels were engaged to transport the consecrated virgins to places of safety; yet our private quarrels were still as fierce as the conflict with the barbarians."†

In another epistle,‡ describing this inroad of the Huns and Vandals, Jerome states, that for twenty years those terrible invaders had been the scourge of Europe and Asia, and that they were instruments in the hands of an offended God, to punish the impenitent, whose mutual animosities were as unsparing as the sword of the enemy. "It is for our sins," said he, "that these monsters proceed in their career of rapine, violation, and slaughter." "The churches are demolished, the dead are torn from their graves; horses are stabled in sacred places, the monasteries are razed to the ground, the rivers are discoloured with blood; neither age, nor sex, nor virtue, nor dignity, is spared; every horror is committed

* They were persuaded to embrace before the altar of the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem, A.D. 397.

† See Epist. Hier. 84 aliter 30, de Morte Fabiolæ, p. 661.

‡ Epist. Hier. ad Heliod. 35 aliter 3, p. 274.

throughout the land, and it is better to be among the dead than the living." So wrote Jerome, in the course of this very year, and yet not a heart among the Christian polemics was softened, there was no relenting, and never was theological hatred indulged or expressed with more envenomed malice.* A.D. 396.

The conversation of Rufinus, and his contemptuous estimate of Jerome, probably strengthened those convictions in the mind of Vigilantius, which Jerome's own conduct and the practical exhibition of the ecclesiastical system in the metropolis of Palestine had tended to produce. Vigilantius returned to Bethlehem prepared to resist the powerful influence of the Master, and assumed courage enough to remonstrate with him on some subjects on which they differed. What those subjects were I am unable to discover, except the Origenist question, to which Jerome plainly alludes, in the letter afterwards addressed to Vigilantius, which I shall examine more fully in a subsequent chapter. 'It would have been nothing more than proper,' said he in that letter, which was in answer to a treatise written by Vigi- Vigilantius returns to Bethlehem.

* In justice to Jerome, I am happy to observe, that his vindication of himself, four or five years afterwards, contained this noble appeal to the better feelings of Rufinus:—'Where is the benefit of two old men like ourselves quarrelling about heretics, especially when both of us profess to be Catholics? Let us shake hands, let us be united, let us follow the example of, and keep pace with, those two great men (Theophilus and Anastasius) of the East and West. We are both old men; let us correct the errors of our youth.'—Apologia adv. Ruf. lib. 3. Hier. Op. tom. 4. pars ii. p. 445.

A. D. 396.

lantius, 'if I had declined giving you any satisfaction upon points, on which you refused to believe my declaration, when we discussed them by word of mouth.' He then proceeds to vindicate his opinions and conduct in regard to the works of Origen. 'Did I not say that Origen had erred? Did I not daily anathematize him?' This implies that frequent conversations were held about Origen, and that Jerome took pains, but unsuccessfully, to satisfy the Gaul, that there was no ground for the suspicions that were afloat at his expense.

Remonstrates with Jerome on the subject of Origen's errors.

I collect therefore that Vigilantius had ventured to express the same opinion, which many others entertained, viz., that Jerome had made an unguarded use of Origen in his commentaries; that he had committed himself and done injury to the sacred cause of gospel truth by his frequent praise of that writer; and that he had no right to find fault with Rufinus, or those who were reviled as Origenists, while he himself was not free from blame. It is probable that Vigilantius had not yet made himself sufficiently master of the argument, that he had not even read enough of Origen's works, to entitle him to act as censor on the occasion, and that he betrayed some ignorance of the matters in dispute, which would make Jerome the more angry at his interference; but there is no proof of his having said anything unworthy of the language or manner, which a young man ought to adopt in his expostulation with an elder like Jerome. It was no uncommon thing

for men of acknowledged eminence, in that day, to express themselves warmly in this celebrated controversy, even while they admitted that they did not understand all its bearings. Pammachius and Oceanus, when they requested an explanation of Jerome, and Pope Anastasius when he condemned Rufinus, acknowledged that they were not thoroughly acquainted with what Origen had written, or Jerome had translated. Vigilantius therefore, without any very great presumption, might signify his surprise and regret, that dangerous errors should have been countenanced by Jerome. If he had done it disrespectfully or improperly, surely Jerome would have made a representation of such offensive conduct to Paulinus, at the same time that he complained of other things which had given him umbrage. A.D. 396.

The erroneous comment, which Vigilantius made on a passage in the Book of Daniel, was an after concern, else the monk in this letter to Paulinus would scarcely have termed that offender a 'holy presbyter,' whom he afterwards branded as 'a blasphemer,' and exhorted to make atonement for his crime 'in sackcloth and ashes.'

An incident occurred before the departure of Vigilantius, which Jerome related very unfairly to his disadvantage. The monk was expounding or preaching on the resurrection; this was one of the subjects on which he was accused of leaning to the errors of Origen. But his discourse on that occasion was so pleasing to the Gaul that he rose up and loudly applauded the preacher; he clapped Anecdote of Vigilantius.

A. D. 396.

with his hands, stamped with his feet, declared that nothing could be more orthodox than the doctrine he heard, and apologized for his former suspicions. Jerome spoke of this proceeding as if it were a piece of hypocrisy and double dealing; but surely it was an ingenuous outburst of delight at finding that the father was orthodox, where he had reason to fear he was in error.

In the same angry epistle* in which Jerome accused Vigilantius of declaiming against himself, he also charged him with railing at Oceanus, Vincentius, Paulinianus and Eusebius; but whether this dispute with those friends of Jerome took place while the Gaul was at Bethlehem or afterwards, is a matter of doubt. All the four were certainly at Bethlehem in the course of this year,† but more of this hereafter. I may, however, now take the opportunity of observing, that men like Paulinianus and Vincentius, who could not tolerate a difference of opinion in their own diocesan, were just as likely to be on the transgressing side in a disputation as Vigilantius. With the monks at Bethlehem, as with those who would now introduce monasticism‡ into our own insti-

Disputes at Bethlehem.

* Ibid. p. 277.

† See Tillemont, vol. 12, pp, 194, 208.

‡ 'But if the truth must be spoken, what are the humble monk, and the holy man, and other regulars, as they are called, but Christians after the very pattern given us in Scripture.'—'Did our Saviour come on earth suddenly, as he will one day visit, in whom would he see the features of the Christians he and his apostles left behind them, but in them?'—Newman's Sermons on the Subjects of the present Day, p. 328. A measure which was lately adopted with the sanction of the highest authorities of our church, namely, the ap-

tutions, bishops were to be regarded as successors of the apostles, and episcopal authority was to be reverenced, just so long as it suited them to appeal to it,* but when it was exercised against themselves, then bishops were not to be lords over them, but fathers only.† A. D. 396.

All that we can assume for certain from Jerome's very brief notice of Vigilantius at this time is, that the Gallic priest went away from Bethlehem in a hurry, that all parties were somewhat dissatisfied with each other, and that Rufinus was blamed for the abrupt termination of an acquaintance, which began under circumstances highly favourable to the stranger from Aquitain. Abrupt departure of Vigilantius from Bethlehem.

The two following extracts, one from Jerome's letter addressed to Paulinus, in answer to the epistle brought to him by Vigilantius, and the other from his vindication of himself in reply to the invectives of Rufinus, written about six years afterwards, will show what was the worst he had

pointment of an Anglican Bishop at Jerusalem, is thus denounced by Mr. Newman: 'May that measure utterly fail and come to nought; and be as though it had never been.'—Note to Sermon xxii, p. 379. Such is the language of these advocates of Church principles and of episcopal authority, when episcopal authority is exercised contrary to their notions.

* 'Apud nos Apostolorum locum Episcopi tenent.'—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 65. In the epistle in which this passage occurs (Ep. 27 al. 54) there is that curious charge against the Montanists of holding mystic orgies, which has been reiterated against Christians and heretics from the earliest times.

† 'Ut Pontifices Christi, (qui tamen rectam fidem prædicant) non dominorum metu, sed Patrum honore veneremur; ut deferamus Episcopis ut Episcopis, et non sub nomine alterius, aliis quibus nolumus, servire cogamur.'—Ibid. p. 339.

A. D. 396.

to allege against the Gaul, before resentment added bitterness to his indignation.

Jerome's first account of his dissatisfaction with Vigilantius.

'I am not satisfied with any mediocrity in you, my Paulinus, I am anxious that you should take the highest place, that you should be wholly perfect. With regard to the holy presbyter Vigilantius, and how warmly I received him, it is better that you should receive the information from his own mouth than from my letter. I cannot explain why he should be in such a hurry to leave me, and should take his departure so soon, lest I should appear to injure somebody. However, I have detained him for a short time, though he was only a passing visitor, and in haste to be gone, and I have given him a taste of my friendship, that you may learn from him whatever you may desire to know about me. I salute your holy fellow-servant and fellow-soldier (Therasia) in the Lord through you.' *

Jerome imputes his rupture with Vigilantius to Rufinus.

'I do not know what you are dreaming about in the matter of Vigilantius. For where have I written that he was polluted with heretical communion at Alexandria? Mention the book; produce the epistle; you will nowhere find it. And

* 'Nihil in te mediocre contentus sum: totum summum, totum perfectum desidero. Sanctum Vigilantium Presbyterum qua aviditate susceperim, melius est ut ipsius verbis, quàm meis discas litteris: qui cur tam citò à nobis profectus sit, et nos reliquerit, non possum dicere, ne lædere quempiam videar. Tamen quasi prætereuntem et festinantem paululum retinui, et gustum ei nostræ amicitiæ dedi; ut per eum discas, quid in nobis desideres. Sanctam conservam tuam, et tecum in Domino militantem, per te salutari volo.'—Epist. 49, alias 13, ad Paulinum. Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 568.

with the same license, yea, even with the same lying impudence which induces you to believe that all will give credence to your words, you add, 'Since you have cited against him a passage from the scriptures so wrongfully that I dare not repeat it with my mouth.' You dare not repeat it; you! who accuse me the more by keeping silence! And since you have nothing which you can object, you pretend to be on the reserve, that the reader may imagine you are sparing me, when, liar that you are, you spare not your own soul. What is this passage of scripture which may not come out of that modest mouth of thine? or what is there improper that can be quoted from the sacred books? If you are ashamed to speak it, at least write it, that my own words may convict me of levity. But, to be silent on other matters, I shall prove from this one chapter that you possess an iron face of deception. See how much I dread your accusation. If you produce what you threaten, all will become mine that now is yours. I have answered you in answering Vigilantius, for he blamed the same things which afterwards you both praise as a friend and blame as an enemy. I know by whom this person's madness against me is excited. I am aware of your underhand devices; I am not unacquainted with the simplicity which all commend. By this man's folly your malevolence against me has run riot; and if I have thrown this back by my letter, in order that you alone should not appear to wield the sceptre of literature, you ought not to pretend

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that there is immodesty in my words, for in no one instance have you found it; but you should understand and confess that your calumnies have been answered through his stupidity.' *

* 'In Vigilantii nomine quid somnies, nescio. Ubi enim eum scripsi hæretica apud Alexandriam communione maculatum? Da librum, profer Epistolam, nusquam omnino reperies: et eadem licentia, immo impudentia mentiendi, qua putas omnes tuis sermonibus credituros, addis: "quando testimonium de Scripturis in eum tam injuriose posuisti, ut ego id repetere meo ore non audeam." Non audes repetere, qui tacendo amplius criminaris? Et quia non habes quod objicias, simulas verecundiam: ut lector te putet mihi parcere, qui mentiens nec tuæ animæ pepercisti. Quod est illud testimonium de Scripturis, quod de tuo illo pudentissimo ore non exeat? Aut quid in sanctis Libris potest turpe memorari? Si erubescis loqui, scribe saltem, ut nos procacitatis proprius sermo convincat. Ut cætera sileam, ex hoc uno capitulo comprobabo, ferream te frontem possidere fallaciæ. Vide quantum timeam criminationem tuam. Si protuleris quod minaris, mea erunt universa quæ tua sunt. Ego in Vigilantio tibi respondi. Eadem enim accusabat, quæ tu postea et amicus laudas, et inimicus accusas. Scio à quo illius contra me rabies concitata sit, novi cuniculos tuos. Simplicitatem quam omnes prædicant, non ignoro. Per illius stultitiam tua in me malitia debacchata est: quam ego si Epistola mea repuli; ne solus habere videaris baculum litterarum, non debes turpitudinem simulare verborum, quam nusquam omnino legisti: sed intelligere et confiteri per illius vecordiam, tuis calumniis fuisse responsum.' Apologia adv. Ruf. Hier. Oper. 4. pars ii. p. 457.

## CHAP. XV.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 396-7.

Vigilantius departs from Palestine.

We have seen that Vigilantius quitted Bethlehem with his opinion of Jerome greatly shaken. 'He went away hastily,' said Jerome, 'and his stay was so short that it was only a passing visit.' Up to this time nothing appeared injurious to his character. On the contrary he was mentioned in terms of respect, and the reproach which was uttered by Jerome at his sudden departure was in the tone of friendship unrequited, not insulted.* 'If they did not part on good terms, I do not see how,' says Tillemont, 'Jerome could speak of him as if he were a "holy priest."'† Evidently they disputed and were reconciled. It is uncertain whither Vigilantius first directed his steps, after quitting the place of the Saviour's nativity; but there is no doubt that he visited Egypt, and then embarked for Europe. The correspondence, of which I have given extracts in the preceding

Visits Egypt, and studies in Alexandria.

* Hier. Op. 4. ii. p. 568, and compare Tillemont, vol. xii. p. 195.
† Tillemont, ibid.

A. D. 396-7.

chapter, alludes to his being the bearer of a letter from Jerome to Paulinus, and to his setting out from Bethlehem with the intention of conveying it to him; of his going to Alexandria,* and of his censorious remarks on the conduct and opinions of Jerome during his voyage from thence to Italy.† What other parts of Egypt he visited, how long he remained there, and who were his instructors or associates in Alexandria, on these particulars we have no accurate information; but incidental complaints, falling from the pen of Jerome, intimate that his thoughts and studies were principally occupied during his sojourn in Egypt, with the same subject which caused his first dispute with that father. Alexandria, under its Archbishop Theophilus, was at that time the hot-bed, where the bitter fruits of the Origenist controversy were brought to maturity; and there, stung by the recollection of the taunts, which he had received at Bethlehem, touching his ignorance of the real merit of the question,‡ the Gallic Presbyter pored over the subject with all the aid he could obtain, and imbibed such strong prejudices against Origen, that he began to think it was impious even to read, much more to translate that author. When he was on ship-board, in his passage to the Italian coast, this '*vexata quæstio*,' was the topic of conversation; and as monks and nuns, in correspondence with the fraternity at Bethlehem, were flying in all directions from the East towards Rome, to

voyage taly.

* Hier. Op. 4. ii. p. 457. † Ibid. p. 277.
‡ Ibid. p. 276.

:ape from the terrible invasion of the Huns, A. D. 396.7.
ing more afraid of the tempest raging under
)se barbarians, than of the wind and waves;*
:re were not wanting persons, in the same vessel,
give information to Jerome of the new adversary
io had entered the lists against him. 'As soon
you were at sea, and the bilge-water began to
t upon your poor weak and disturbed brain,
:n you began to attack me, then you bethought
urself, that I was heretical in my opinions.'†
ch were the elegant terms in which the father
:orded his anger: and 'You falsely accuse me
Origenism,' was the burthen of his song; so
it Jerome's first public complaint against Vigi-
itius was not that Vigilantius was a heretic, but
it Vigilantius had accused him, Jerome, of
terodoxy. This is a curious and a very impor-
it fact in the history of this quarrel.

Our Gaul crossed the Adriatic, and landed, it Vigilantius in Italy, and conveys a letter to Paulinus.
ıy be surmised, on the coast of Italy, in order
proceed first to Nola with his letters for Pauli-
s, and then to make his way towards his own
untry. We have not the slightest account of
; interview with Paulinus, but we know that the
istle from Jerome was delivered: for Paulinus
ıde some observations upon it, which drew forth
·ejoinder and explanation from Jerome. In the
istle of which Vigilantius was the bearer, the Contents of the letter.
stere monk had exacted, or had expressed him-
lf as if he exacted, of his friend, a total surren-

* Ibid. p. 661. † Ibid. p. 277.

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der of his property, and had cited the example of an heathen philosopher who had made a like sacrifice.* Against this, there was some remonstrance on the part of Paulinus, who asked for an explanation, and Jerome wrote again to assure him, that he did not mean that his words should be taken literally. 'To make a sacrifice of one's gold is the act of incipient, not of perfect virtue. Crates the Theban did this, and so did Antisthenes. But to offer ourselves to God is the peculiar act of Christians and apostles.'—'The Lord requires the souls of believers, and not their money.'—'I have so much to do, and am so beset with pilgrims, that I am not always able to read over what I have written. Therefore, when you find any paradox in my letters, or anything inaccurately expressed, attribute it to your own misapprehensions, or to the errors and carelessness of my amanuenses, who sometimes inscribe what I did not indite, or they did not understand, and while they attempt to correct other people's errors, exhibit their own.'†

* See supra, p. 248.

† Aurum deponere incipientium est, non perfectorum. Fecit hoc Thebanus Crates, fecit Antisthenes. Seipsum offerre Deo, proprie Christianorum est et Apostolorum.—Sed Dominus magis quærit animas credentium, quàm opes.—Ego enim tanta volumina præ frequentia commeantium et peregrinorum turbis relegere non potui; et ut ipsi probavere præsentes, longo tentus incommodo vix diebus quadragesimæ, quibus ipsi proficiscebantur, respirare cœpi. Unde si paragrammata repereris, vel minus aliqua descripta sunt, quæ sensum legentis impediant, non mihi debes imputare, sed tuis, et imperitiæ notariorum librariorumque incuriæ; qui scribunt non quid inveniunt, sed quod intelligunt, et dum alienos errores emendare nituntur, ostendunt suos. Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 578.

This is a fatal admission of Jerome. If he himself wrote hastily

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From Nola, Vigilantius made an overland journey to his own country, at the foot of the Pyrenees, on the Gallic side of the mountains, and his route lay through the Cottian Alps: a circumstance to which Jerome referred several years afterwards, in one of those off-hand splenetic sentences, in which he was wont to indulge in his angry moments. I will not interrupt my narrative to relate on what occasion it was written, it will be enough to say, that in the year 404 Jerome addressed a letter against Vigilantius to Riparius, in which he exclaimed, 'I once saw the monster, and endeavoured to chain him down with the testimonies of Scripture, but he took himself away, he escaped, he broke forth, and clamoured against me, "inter Adriæ fluctus, Cottiique regis Alpes."' * Tillemont renders this passage, 'He declaimed against Jerome in the midst of the waves of the Adriatic sea, and among the snows of the Cottian Alps, which separate Italy from Dauphiné and Provence.' †

Vigilantius in the Cottian Alps.

and inaccurately, if the transcribers were incorrect, and if, according to his assertion in another place, the '*falsitas dispensativa*' were allowable, [see supra, p. 268,] to which of the alleged writings of the Fathers, and to which of their dogmas, may we implicitly trust, as containing a true statement either of the facts or opinions of the fourth century?

* This mode of expression intimates a continuity of action, and the sequence of one event after another, viz. the disputes at Bethlehem, the departure in consequence, the voyage across the Adriatic, and the arrival and invectives in the Cottian Alps.

† 'Il déclama contre lui au milieu des flots de la mer Adriatique, et parmi les neiges des Alpes Cottiennes, qui séparent l'Italie du Dauphiné et de la Provence.' Tillemont, St. Jerome, vol. xii. p. 195.

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Bayle reads, 'between the Adriatic sea and the Alps.' (See his article on Vigilantius.)

Faber understands it to refer to 'a region between the waves of the Adriatic and the Alps of King Cottius.' * Now this statement corresponds exactly with Jerome's previous mention of the Gaul's sudden departure from Bethlehem,—of his intended visit to Paulinus,—of his invectives against himself during the voyage, and afterwards in the Cottian Alps,—and of his return to his own country. I repeat Jerome's expressions to show the connection between the several events referred to by him in the order of time in which they occurred.

1. On the abrupt departure of Vigilantius from Bethlehem. 'He left us so hastily.' 'He was gone, he escaped.' †

2. On his intention to visit Paulinus. 'It is better that you should have it from his own words than from my letter.' ‡

3. On his voyage to Italy and declamations against Jerome. 'As soon as you were on board ship.' §

4. On his continued invectives in the Cottian

* Vallenses and Albigenses, p. 293.

† '1. Qui cur tam citò à nobis profectus sit, et nos reliquerit.' Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 568. 'Abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit.' Ibid. p. 279.

‡ 2. 'Melius est ut ipsius verbis, quàm meis discas litteris:—ut per eum discas.' ibid. p. 568.

§ 3. 'Postquam navigare cœpisti:—tunc nos Hæreticos recordatus es.' Ibid. p. 277.

Alps 'He declaimed against me, amidst the Adriatic seas and the Cottian Alps.'* A.D. 396-7.

5. On his return to his own country. 'You boast in your own country.'†

What brought Vigilantius to the Cottian Alps.

But why did Vigilantius travel into Aquitain by the passes of the Cottian Alps? Because it was a common route to take in those days from the South of Italy to Gaul, and especially to such as desired to see their friends in Rome, or Milan, or Turin, before they crossed the Alps. In the case of Vigilantius, in the year 397, this route was precisely the line he would be likely to follow, for Rufinus, with whom he was again in communication, was either at Rome or Milan,‡ having returned to Italy this year. And if the council convoked at Turin, by desire of the Gallic bishops of the Five Provinces, to decide some questions relating to the churches of Vienne, Arles, Marseilles and others,§ met this year, as some chronologists have said, that of itself was enough to draw him to the north of Italy. He was perhaps aware that he would find in the Cottian Alps a race of people, who were opposed to those notions of celibacy and vows of continence, which formed the favourite dogma of Jerome, and were at the bottom of all his ascetic austerities.

A.D. 397.

Council at Turin, A.D. 397.

* 4. 'Cottiique regis Alpes, in nos declamando clamavit.' Ibid. p. 279.

† 5. 'Scilicet et gloriari cupis; et in patria tua jactitas.' p. 277.

‡ See Tillemont, xii. p. 218, and compare with Jerome's Apology, lib. 1. See also Crit. Hist. Ch. Pagi. sub an. 397.

§ Sirmond. Con. Galliæ, i. 27.

A. D. 397.

Opposition to the yoke of celibacy in the Subalpine and Gallic provinces.

Some years before, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, had complained that the secluded parts of his patriarchate contained clergy *who refused on the plea of ancient custom* to submit to the yoke of celibacy.* The treatise against Vigilantius, written by Jerome in 406, contains this apostrophe, so remarkable for its extravagance and exaggeration.

'Shame upon them! He is said to have bishops the accomplices of his crime, if they can be called bishops who ordain none deacons but such as are married, and who will not give the sacraments of Christ unless they see the wives of the clergy pregnant, or that they have children crying in their mother's arms.'† I do not feel sure that this inflated passage applied to the ecclesiastics of the Cottian Alps, and I do not know of any *bishops* of that locality to whom it could apply: but it shows that there were bishops and clergy in the Gallic provinces averse from the yoke of celibacy imposed by asceticism, and with whom Vigilantius would be likely to put himself into personal communication, wherever he could find them. Be this as it may, the Gallic Presbyter, who was afterwards famous for protesting against clerical

Traditional and historical connexion between Vigilantius and the ancestors of the Waldenses.

* Quod eo non præterii quia in plerisque abditioribus locis cum ministerium gererent, vel etiam sacerdotium, filios susceperunt: et id tamquam usu veteri defendunt.' Ambrose de Officiis Ministrorum, lib. i. c. 50.

† 'Proh nefas, Episcopos sui sceleris dicitur habere consortes; si tamen Episcopi nominandi sunt, qui non ordinant Diaconos, nisi prius uxores duxerint: nulli cœlibi credentes pudicitiam, imò ostendentes quàm sanctè vivant, qui malè de omnibus suspicantur; et nisi prægnantes uxores viderint Clericorum, infantesque de ulnis matrum vagientes, Christi sacramenta non tribuunt.' Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 281.

vows, relic-worship, and similar errors, is recorded to have been asserting some of his opinions in the Cottian Alps, at this juncture of time; and the passage before us has been advanced in evidence of some connection between Vigilantius and the ancestors of the people, who still hold the same opinions in the same secluded valleys. A.D. 397.

If this were a solitary link in the chain, by which has been sought to bind together the history of Vigilantius with that of the Protestants of the Valleys of Dauphiné and Piedmont, it would scarcely be worth notice. But other links have been produced, and though the chain is still broken, it is one which Romanists, as well as Protestants, have tried to render perfect.

The advocates of Romish dogmas have often been forward in declaring that the *heresies* of Vigilantius were the seeds of subalpine nonconformity. In the ninth century it was put on record by Jonas of Orleans and Dungalus, that the false teaching of Vigilantius still found scholars ready to receive it in parts of the subalpine diocese of Claude, Bishop of Turin; * and both Jonas and Dungalus attribute the Iconoclastic proceedings of Claude to the example of Vigilantius. It is therefore necessary to examine the point more closely in this place, and to see what arguments can be adduced in support of the tradition that the locality, whether *in* the Cottian Alps, or *between* the Cottian Alps and the Adriatic Sea,

* See Libri 3. Jonæ Aur. de Cult. Imaginum. et Dungal. adver. Claud. Taur. Sententias.

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where Vigilantius was inveighing against Jerome in 397, was that which has been termed the cradle of the Waldenses.

Description of the Cottian Alps.

The Cottian Alps are the great range of mountains south of Mount Cenis, between the Graian and the Maritime Alps; and the valleys on each side of this vast barrier between Gaul and Italy, comprising the country about Briançon and Embrun on the western, and Fenestrelle, Pignerol, and Angrogna, with parts of what was called Lombardy during the dark and middle ages, on the eastern side, have been the strongholds of the Waldenses, and of those who opposed themselves to corrupt doctrines in favour at Rome, from very early times, before the term Waldenses came into use.

But will such a vague statement as that of Jerome, whether he meant to say that Vigilantius declaimed against him *between* the Adriatic and the Cottian Alps, or both *in* the Adriatic and *in* the COTTIAN ALPS, enable us to point to the particular region in question? Is it definite enough? Will it admit of being used as a finger-post to the country now inhabited by the people called the Waldenses, or men of the valleys? Have we any similar expressions in other ancient writers, which will help to identify the spot alluded to by Jerome, whether we read it with Bayle in its widest acceptation 'between the Adriatic and the Cottian Alps,' or with Tillemont in its more limited construction, 'Among the snows of the Cottian Alps, which divide Italy from Dauphiné and Provence?'

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Yes, we have. When Polybius meant to designate part of the very region now under discussion, viz., that Piedmontese and Subalpine region in Italy, which Hannibal first reached in his march towards Rome, after descending from the summit of the Alps upon the country of the Taurini, (people about Turin), that historian's loose description was to this effect. 'The plains of the Po, of which we have already said so much, are separated from the valley of the Rhone, by that Alpine ridge which stretches from Marseilles to the extremity of the Adriatic; and these are the mountains which Hannibal crossed, when he turned from the region of the Rhone to pass over into Italy.' * This geographical description, (placing the Valley of the Rhone, the plains of the Po, the point of Hannibal's descent into Italy, and the Adriatic, in juxtaposition) which was thought to be sufficiently distinctive for the purposes of Polybius, is in part followed by Appian.† 'Pompey,' says Appian, 'penetrated into the Alpine mountains with great resolution, in emulation of Hannibal's enterprise, and formed *a new*

* 'Ὁ δὲ Ῥοδανὸς ἔχει τὰς μὲν πηγὰς ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἀδριατικὸν μυχὸν πρὸς τὴν ἑσπέραν νευούσας, ἐν τοῖς ἀποκλίνουσι μέρεσι τῶν Ἄλπεων ὡς πρὸς τὰς ἄρκτους· ῥεῖ δὲ πρὸς τὰς χειμερινὰς δύσεις, ἐκβάλλει δ' εἰς τὸ Σαρδῶον πέλαγος. φέρεται δ' ἐπιπολὺ δι' αὐλῶνος· οὗ πρὸς μὲν τὰς ἄρκτους Ἄρδυες Κελτοὶ κατοικοῦσι, τὴν δ' ἀπὸ μεσημβρίας αὐτοῦ πλευρὰν ὁρίζουσι πᾶσαν αἱ πρὸς ἄρκτον κεκλιμέναι τῶν Ἄλπεων παρώρειαι. τὰ δὲ πεδία τὰ παρὰ τὸν Πάδον, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἡμῖν εἴρηται διὰ πλειόνων, ἀπὸ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Ῥοδανὸν αὐλῶνος διαξευγνύουσιν αἱ τῶν προειρημένων ὀρῶν ἀκρώρειαι, λαμβάνουσαι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀπὸ Μασσαλίας, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸν τοῦ παντὸς Ἀδρία μυχόν· ἃς τόθ' ὑπεράρας Ἀννίβας ἀπὸ τῶν κατὰ τὸν Ῥοδανὸν τόπων, νέβαλεν εἰς Ἰταλίαν.'—Polybius, lib. iii. 47.

† Whitaker has observed on this in his Course of Hannibal, p. 121.

A. D. 397. *route midway* between the *springs of the Rhone, which Polybius places above the Adriatic gulf, and the Po.*'*

The springs of the Po are within ten or twelve miles of the Waldensian district; and if Jerome had his eye upon that region of the Cottian Alps, which afforded a passage into Gaul, or on that *secluded part* of Lombardy, where Ambrose said the priests rejected the yoke of celibacy, no wonder that, in his ignorance of its exact position, he described it with the same latitude of expression, which Polybius and Appian had used before him.

Jerome, therefore, whose geographical knowledge of the country was not so clear as to allow him to be very distinct in his descriptions, has said enough to direct us to those Cottian Alps now occupied by the Waldenses. But what authority have we for saying that this was the territory in our traveller's line when journeying by land from Campania to Aquitain? The best road from Italy to Gaul was by the passes of the Cottian Alps. If he went by Rome, and from thence to Turin or Milan, as we have attempted to show, and then proceeded to scale the mountain barrier, the Cottian was the very pass which was at that time one of the most practicable and direct of all the roads out of Italy into Gaul.

See the description of a writer of the fourth century, when he was speaking of the road which

* Appian de Bel. Civ. lib. i.

from Cisalpine Gaul, and through the valleys the Cottian Alps, over Mount Genèvre to ngon, on the western side of the mountains. is the central,' said he, 'the short, and the t frequented of all the passes that lead out of y into Gaul *." Bergier, in his learned his- of the principal roads in the Roman empire, s a very full account of that which conducted ugh the Cottian Alps, and speaks of it as the ed way which formed the grand line of com- ication between Italy, the Gauls, Britain, and in †. This then was the exact course that lantius would take in his journey across the s to the foot of the Pyrenees, and when he ered the pass he was in the midst of the valleys called Perosa and Pragelas; and this road him through places which have long been ous in Waldensian history, viz. Pignerol and estrelle, on the Italian side of the Alps, and ançon and Embrun, on the French side. Here those mountain-recesses, where King Cottius id safety, when other chiefs were subdued by power of pagan Rome; and here are the fast- es where the people of God have since been tered from the tyranny of papal Rome.

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another question that arises is this, Were people of the Cottian Alps then Christians? l the gospel then reached them? There was

Had the gospel been received in the Cottian Alps at this time?

* Media, compendiaria, magisque celebris.'—Ammian. Marcel. v.

† Bergier Hist. des Grands Chemins de l'Empire Rom. lib. iii. c. 31, 6. Waldensian Researches, pp. 54—62.

A. D. 397. scarcely any place in the Roman empire which the gospel had not reached.

> 'Exit usque ad ortum
> Solis, et usque obitum. Gallos fovit, imbuit
> Britannos, præsidit Hispaniæ.'*

This is not merely the poetical rhapsody of a Christian bard of this period, but it is a true description of the manner in which Christianity had spread, and was then exercising its benign and softening influence everywhere. The Christians were no longer regarded as the pests of society, and charged with being the cause of every calamity which assailed families and nations;† nor did they now constitute a feeble minority in the city, the camp, the court, or the field, but they presented everywhere a bold front; and character and influence were decidedly on their side. The arm of power did not protect and afterwards establish Christianity, under Constantine and his successors, until its intrinsic excellence had been fully manifested in the lives and conversation of its professors. For not only did indifferent observers among the Gentiles bear testimony to the moral beauty‡ of the religion which had been

* Prudentius, Perist. Hymn 14, 101.

† 'Quod existiment omnis publicæ cladis, omnis popularis incommodi Christianos esse causam.'—'Si Tiberis ascendit ad Mœnia, si Nilus non ascendit in arva, si cœlum stetit, si terra movit, si fama, si lues, statim Christianos ad Leonem.'—Tertullian Apol. 40. Edit. Par. 1664, p. 32.

‡ Ammianus Marcellinus speaks of the plain and simple religion of the Christians. 'Christianam religionem absolutam et simplicem,' &c.—Ammian. Marcel. l. 21, c. 16, p. 226. Edit. Lug. Bat. 1693.

gradually introduced into society, but avowed enemies of the cross confessed its improving and benignant tendency; and where this was acknowledged, ascendancy followed as a natural consequence. 'Is it not disgraceful to us,' said the Emperor Julian, 'that these Galileans should not only support their own poor, but ours also?*' No wonder, then, that there should have been a willingness in the public mind to receive Christianity, and that the shout, 'We too are Christians,'† should thunder from the multitude, when they were deciding the claims of a Christian and a Heathen aspirant to the purple, after the death of Julian.‡ A. D. 397.

By this time, indeed, not only good men were showing a readiness to embrace the gospel, but an anxiety was exhibited to be thought Christians, by

* See Julian's Epistle on the Reformation of Paganism.

† 'Tunc temporis vero cum Imperator esset nuncupatus, imperium suscipere detractabat. Et militibus per vim eum trahentibus; vociferabatur nolle se, qui Christianus esset, hominibus superstitioni Gentilium deditis imperare. Verum postea quam omnes una voce professi sunt se quoque Christianos esse, ipse quidem imperium suscepit.'—Socratis Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ, lib. iii. cap. xxii. Edit. Par. 1668, p. 195.

'Hac audita oratione, exclamavere communiter universi: ne dubites Imperator, neve repellas imperium nostrum, ut improbum: Imperator es enim Christianorum futurus, qui in pietatis disciplina educati sunt, cum grandiores inter nos doctrinam Constantini perceperint, minores autem illis Constantius instruxerit.'—Ecclesiasticæ Historiæ Theodoreti Episcopi Cyrensis Liber Quartus, cap. i. p. 771. Ed. Basileæ 44.

‡ Even Julian himself went to a Christian church, to propitiate a military force which he knew to consist principally of Christians. 'Utque omnes nullo impediente ad sui favorem illiceret, adhærere cultui Christiano fingebat.' 'Progressus in illorum ecclesiam solenniter numine orato, discessit.'—Ammian. Mar. lib. xxi. 2.

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persons who had no real claim to that high distinction! A singular proof of the homage paid to the new religion, and of the respect for piety, which is imbibed upon a familiar acquaintance with the virtuous, was given by the two most eminent poets of this period, Ausonius and Claudian, as I have shown in a preceding chapter.

Christianity was penetrating everywhere in the Roman empire.

Christianity had, in fact, at this time, not only established itself in the palaces, temples, and council-chambers of the two capitals of the Roman empire, and found its way to the chief cities of the provinces and to the marts of commerce, but it had also penetrated to the remotest country places, and even many villages, which, from being less within the reach of instruction than towns, had given the name of *Pagans* * to such as long remained unconverted, now contained Christian churches and sanctuaries,—the loveliest sight that can gladden the eye.

Several years before the date at the head of this chapter, an imperial edict spoke as if few professed pagans remained anywhere within the provinces. 'If any pagans that remain, though we believe there are none,' &c. † It would be therefore unreasonable, even in default of express mention of the fact, to question the existence of Christians in the valleys of the Cottian Alps, on

* See Glossarium Ducangii sub verbo.

† 'Paganos qui supersunt, quamquam jam nullos esse credamus, promulgatarum legum jamdudum præscripta compescant.' Codex Theodos. cum perpetuis commentariis. Jacobi Gottesfredi, vol. vi. p. 294. Edit. Lugduni. 1665, lib. xvi. tit. x. 22.

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;round of seclusion and remoteness, and of nprobability of the gospel having taken root . But we have better reason still for believ- hat the Cottian Alps were even then evan- :d; and that the traditions which boast of arly conversion, and of the faithful adherence e inhabitants of this region to the primitive have historical foundations whereon to rest. is to these mountains, among others, that tian confessors fled during the several early cutions, and it is a matter of historical record renæus, in the second century, made himself iinted with the Celtic language, that he t hold intercourse with the remote converts s diocese, which extended up to the Cottian *.

Historical proof that the gospel was professed at this time in the Cottian Alps.

e Christian soldiers of the celebrated Theban ı were scattered through the whole of the ime and Cottian Alps, especially in the r of the Po, which rises near Mount Viso. Secondo, a Piedmontese village, near the e, within the present Waldensian limits, was led after one of the Theban martyrs; and er confessor, named Chiaffredus, is repre- d to have been concealed in a place called lo, in the year 297, at the foot of Mount and within a few miles of Rora, where the ensian church is still flourishing.† With this

υκ ἐπιζητήσεις δὲ παρὰ ἡμῶν τῶν ἐν Κελτοῖς διατριβόντων, καὶ περὶ διάλεκτον τὸ πλεῖστον ἀσχολουμένων.'—Irenæi. lib. i. adv. Hær. ).

one of the volumes lately edited by a royal commission at

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documentary evidence that the gospel had reached the Cottian Alps, and that the Christianity there professed was unshackled by the yoke of the ascetics, it is not easy to believe that Jerome's mention of the Cottian Alps, in connection with Vigilantius and his invectives, was accidental. Whether the Gallic presbyter *declaimed* there on his way to Aquitain, or in the course of his visits to the Alpine churches at some subsequent period, there is reason to believe that he went among them, expecting to find persons who held opinions similar to his own: and Romish polemics have taken great pains to brand the doctrines since taught in these mountains with the name of the Vigilantian heresy.

Vigilantius returns to Aquitain.

But how long he remained in this province, on his way home, is a question to which we have no clue to guide us. We only know that he returned into his own country after the voyage and journey which took place in 397, and then devoted himself to the study of those subjects on which he and Jerome were at variance.

Vaissette, in his History of Languedoc, employs a note in the inquiry, What was the country of Vigilantius, and in what part of Aquitain did he make his residence, and begin to brood over and promulgate those opinions which were so offensive to the Fathers and Doctors of the Church? The district between Thoulouse and the Pyrenees was

Turin, entitled, ' Monumenta Historiæ Patriæ,' these facts are stated at some length. See Gioffredo Storia delle Alpi Marit. p. 100—180.

arter in which Vaissette places Vigilantius, A. D. 397.
return from Palestine: but he has made a
mistake in supposing that the Gaul entered
ıe service of Sulpicius* again. He was at
me wealthy and independent of patronage,
terwards had the charge of a parish at no
listance from his birthplace, Calagorris, in
untry of the Convenæ.

## NOTE TO CHAPTER XV.

aber argues that *Lugdunum Convenarum* was the birth-place
ıntius, but that he took up his abode in the Cottian Alps,
return from Palestine; and he ingeniously suggests, that
ım Convenarum may have given rise to the tradition which
:he Waldenses from a person named Leo, and denominated
onists.†

though I think it clear that the Valdenses could not have
ed *Leonists* from the Lyons of the opulent merchant Peter,
) say, from the Lyons which is seated upon the Rhone, I am
out a strong suspicion that, ultimately, and through an en-
ferent channel, the title may have been borrowed from *an-*
ons, from Lyons, to wit, in Aquitaine, upon the borders of
nees; from the *Lugdunum Convenarum*, I mean, which now
: name of *St. Bertrand*, and which is situated in what (from
) is styled the *Pays de Cominges*. My conjecture is, that
itional Leo of the Valdenses, however his history may have
cumstantially distorted and chronologically misplaced, is no
an the famous Vigilantius, of whose immediate connection
primitive Christians of the valleys, at the beginning of the
ıtury, we shall presently hear again. This holy man, as we
:ly learn from the very scurrility of Jerome, was actually born
recise town of Lyons, or Convenæ, in Aquitaine. Whence,
e place of his nativity, he would obviously be called, among
of the valleys, *Vigilantius Leo*, or *Vigilantius the Leonist*.

* Vaissette. Hist. du Languedoc, vol. i. p. 638.
in. c. 4, in Bib. Patr. vol. xiii. p. 299. et Claud. Seyssel. adv.
5, 6.

His proper local appellation he communicated, if I mistake not, to his congenial friends, the Vallenses of Piedmont; and his memory, as we see, was affectionately cherished by them, down even to the time of Claude Seyssel. Thus, ultimately, I apprehend, the name of Leonist was derived from Lyons; not, indeed, from the more celebrated Lyons on the Rhone, but from the Lyons of Aquitaine, or the *Lugdunum Convenarum* of the Pyrenees.'—Faber's Vallenses and Albigenses, pp. 278—280.

It will be perceived that I have ventured to differ from Mr. Faber, not only as to the birth-place of Vigilantius, but also as to the time of his first visiting the Cottian Alps, and as to the diocese in which he officiated as a priest. The authorities on which I depend plant him not in an Alpine but in a Pyrenean parish. I cannot but take the opportunity of paying a debt of acknowledgment to Mr. Faber, for drawing my attention to this subject. So long ago as December, 1832, I received a letter from that eminent ecclesiastical scholar, with the following communication:—

'In one of my excursions from your Waldensian researches, I was led, after an interval of some years, to re-peruse Jerome's Epistle to Riparius, with the appended tract against Vigilantius: and I there made a discovery, which did not strike me when I read those documents before with a totally different object, but which may, perhaps, be as interesting to you as it certainly has been to myself.

'*Who was that extraordinary character, Vigilantius?*

'This thought came across me, as I recollected the identity of his religious sentiments with those of your Vaudois: and I forthwith, laying your book aside for a season, set to work to try if I could get to the bottom of the matter.

'"Vigilantius, a native of Aquitaine, and a presbyter of Barcelona, had charged Jerome with too great a lenity to the objectionable opinions of Origen. In return, Jerome, in the year 397, addressed to him a very violent epistle on the subject."—Hieron. Epist. lxxv. Oper. vol. ii. pp. 251, 252.

'Subsequently to the propounding of that epistle, Vigilantius returned into his native country of Gaul; and there he published a treatise against the growing superstition of the age, a treatise which is ascribed to the year 406.

'In his treatise he attacked the notion, that celibacy is the duty of the clergy: censured the excessive veneration of the martyrs, and the figment that they are potent intercessors at the throne of grace: ridiculed the blind and almost idolatrous reverence which was paid to their relics: exposed the folly of burning tapers, like the Pagans, before their shrines, in broad day-light: detected the pretended

miracles said to be wrought by their senseless remains: vilified the boasted sanctity of vainly gratuitous monachism: and pointed out the useless absurdity of pilgrimages either to Jerusalem or to any other reputed sanctuary.

'Such was the drift of his treatise, as we learn from Jerome's reply to it: and, in the course of it, he naturally adverted to Jerome's former indecent attack upon him.

'"Upon this Jerome wrote a very abusive epistle, addressed to Riparius: and, shortly afterward, receiving the treatise itself, he composed an answer to it, in which it is hard to say, whether illogical absurdity or brutal scurrility is the most predominant."—Hieron. Epist. liii. Hieron. adv. Vigilant. Oper. vol. ii. pp. 157—161.

'And now spring up the actual questions: Whence was it, in a rapidly declining Church, that Vigilantius derived his sentiments? In what school had he been instructed? From what part of his native Gaul, when he quitted Barcelona, did he publish the seasonable treatise, which called forth the abuse of Jerome?

'His antagonist tells us: that *he wrote from a region, situated between the waves of the Adriatic and the Cottian Alps;* from a region, that is to say, which formed a part of what was once called *Cisalpine Gaul.*

'"Ego vidi hoc aliquando portentum: et, testimoniis scripturarum, quasi vinculis Hippocratis, volui ligare furiosum. Sed abiit; excessit; evasit; erupit; et, *inter Adriæ fluctus Cottiique regis Alpes*, in nos declamando clamavit."—Hieron. Epist. liii. Oper. vol. ii. p. 158.

'Now I need not tell *you*, that this district on the eastern side of the Cottian Alps is the precise country of the Vallenses. *Here* they *claim* to have lived at least from the time of Pope Sylvester: and *here*, in point of *fact*, as we may presumptively gather from the present remarkable statement of Jerome, they were actually settled as early as in and before the year 406, or only about seventy years from Sylvester's death.

'Perhaps you will say, that I am jumping too rapidly to a conclusion: hear, then, the remainder of Jerome's incidental testimony.

'In his epistle to Riparius, he marvels that the holy bishop, within whose diocese Vigilantius was then residing as a presbyter, did not crush so useless a vessel with a well-aimed blow from the iron rod of apostolicity: but, in his subsequent tract against him, the *reason* of such episcopal forbearance stands out most abundantly manifest. The two superstitious bigots, indeed, Riparius and Desiderius, complained heavily to Jerome, just as the modern Popish priests do of the Vaudois, that their own neighbouring parishes were polluted by such a villainous neighbourhood: and it was charitably added, that, with

Satan's standard in his hand, Vigilantius was making successful incursions upon the slumbering churches of the Gauls.—Hieron. adv. Vigil. Oper. vol. ii. p. 159. But, with respect to the bishops, evidently the bishops of the Alpine district where he sojourned, *they*, however nefarious it might appear to Jerome and his correspondents, perfectly agreed with the misnamed heretic: and, on one special point of difference between the controvertists, they actually *preferred* the ordination of husbands to the ordination of bachelors.

'"Proh nefas! episcopos sui sceleris dicitur habere consortes," &c. Hieron. adv. Vigil. Oper. vol. ii. p. 158.

'The bishops, then, of the district where Vigilantius was ministering as presbyter; that is, the district *inter Adriæ fluctus Cottiique regis Alpes*, were of the same sentiments with himself: and thence, of course, stood opposed to the neighbouring presbyters, Riparius and Desiderius, who held with Rome, and who reported Vigilantius to Jerome.

'Accordingly, Jerome is amazed at the audacity of Vigilantius and his compeers in presuming to differ, both from the Bishop of Rome and (as he is pleased to say) from all other bishops of the known world, as to the vital importance of consecrating the Eucharist over the dead bones of Peter and Paul.—Hieron. adv. Vigil. p. 160.

'Here, therefore, only seventy years after the death of Pope Sylvester, we actually find a Church in the valleys of the Cottian Alps, the theological condition of which exactly corresponds with the account handed down, from generation to generation, among the Vallenses themselves: that is to say, we actually find a Church, in the very region where the account teaches us to seek it, protesting, through the mouth of its approved pastor, Vigilantius (for I venture to claim Vigilantius, after his departure from Barcelona, as a *settled* Vallensic pastor), against the superstitions of the times, and, in its estimate of those superstitions, openly differing from the bishops of the corrupt Church of Rome.'*

In another part of this work, when I come to treat of our Gallic presbyter's subsequent history, I shall enter more fully into the questions of the diocese in which he officiated as priest—the opinions which he proclaimed—the bishops and clergy who were his adver-

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* Having asked Mr. Faber's permission to insert this letter, I received the following reply, which explains his present view of the subject:—

'*Sherburn House, March* 9.

'My dear Sir,—I should be glad if you would leave my letter to you exactly as it *now* stands. At the same time, it is due, both to

or friends—the Gallic churches which he visited—and the pro-
in which his principles have been maintained, with more or
ertinacity, as the principles of the primitive Church. On these
, I do not wish to dogmatize, but to offer facts and statements
lm consideration, and, if possible, to present them in a form
will direct the way to further investigation, and admit of tem-
discussion.

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ıd to myself, to state, that though, with the Benedictines,* I *ally* thought that Riparius and Desiderius were Alpine clerics, vicinity of the country of the Vaudois; I am *now* perfectly ed, both by *your* arguments and by a careful reperusal of Jerome, ıeir parishes were, in truth, in the vicinity of the Pyrenees. You add, that I was ignorant, till you informed me, that the Bene-es *at first* understood Jerome as I did, but that *afterwards*, like f, they saw reason to change their opinion. You might further f you please, that the error is corrected in a new edition of my l Calendar of Prophecy, which is on the eve of coming out, and ıhould my work on the Valdenses ever reach another edition, it there also be corrected. Yours most truly,

'G. S. Faber.'

* Editors of 'Histoire Litéraire de la France.'

## CHAP. XVI.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 398.

igilantius Calagor-s, in Gaul. is occupa-on there.

VIGILANTIUS remained quietly in his own country for many months after his return from Palestine, and devoted himself to sacred studies: but I cannot make out that he undertook any parochial charge, or performed the regular functions of the priesthood, until after he had published the book which gave so much offence to Jerome. Calagorris, as it has been explained (see p. 128), distant about twenty-six miles from *Lugdunum Convenarum*, and forty-five from *Tolosa*, was his native place, and this was the scene of his retirement, while he laboured to qualify himself for the work of a theological polemic. Jerome's frequent and ungenerous allusion to his rusticity, to the wine-cellar and to the tavern at Calagorris, where his father had accumulated his wealth (and where he himself, at some former period, may have followed the same occupation), leave no doubt that our presbyter returned to the town or village where he was born, and resided on his patrimony. Vaissette had Jerome's sarcasms against the 'tapster and wine-taster' in his mind, when he inti-

mated that Vigilantius entered the service of Sulpicius again, and resumed his station as the steward of the vineyards. A. D. 398.

How he employed his time and his resources, and what use he made of the property which had come into his possession, will be seen in the following letter, which has been rendered into English, as literally, as the idiom of our language would permit.*

## *Jerome's Letter to Vigilantius.*†

Jerome's defence of himself on the Origenist controversy.

'1. It would indeed have been just, had I given you no satisfaction by my letters, since you have given no credence to your own ears, for you who have yielded no credence to the word spoken, will not assent to it when written. But since Christ has given us an example of perfect humility in Himself, by kissing his betrayer, and accepting the repentance of the thief upon the cross, in your

* I have thought right to substitute for my own the translation of a friend, the Rev. Joseph Stevenson, the learned editor of 'Beda,' and other works, lately published by the Historical Society.

In the margin I have inserted the various readings, according to the Verona edition of 1734, and a MS. copy of Jerome, in the Library of Durham Cathedral.

### †HIERONYMI EPISTOLA XXXVI.

Alias 75. Scripta anno 396, ed. Ben.

AD VIGILANTIUM.

Justum quidem fuerat, nequaquam tibi litteris satisfacere, qui tuis auribus non credidisti: neque enim schedulæ potes* acquiescere, qui vivo sermoni non accommodasti fidem. Sed quia Christus perfectæ nobis humilitatis exemplar in Se tribuit; dans osculum proditori; et latronis pœnitentiam in patibulo suscipiens, eadem absenti significo,

*Al. *poteris*, ed. V. Christus exemplar perfectæ humilitatis.

A. D. 396.

absence I intimate to you the same things which I also told you when present; that I have read or am reading Origen, as I read Apollinaris or other authors, whose books the Church does not receive in some points. Not that I mean to affirm that all the contents of their books are to be condemned; but I admit that some things are to be reprehended. Since, however, it is my business and my employment to read many authors, that from many quarters I may gather various flowers, not so much with the intention of approving them all, as of selecting the good: I take many writers into my hands, that from many sources I may know many things, according to that which is written, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good *." I am sufficiently astonished therefore that you have wished to object the dogmas of Origen against me, of whose error you are in many points entirely ignorant up to the present hour. Am I an heretic? and why, I pray you, do the heretics dislike me? Are you orthodox? you who even

quæ præsenti quoque loquutus sum, me ita Origenem legisse vel legere, ut Apollinarium,* vel cæteros Tractatores, quorum in quibusdam, libros Ecclesia non recipit. Non quo omnia dicam esse damnanda, quæ in illorum voluminibus continentur: sed quod quædam reprehendenda confitear. Verum quia operis mei est et studii, multos legere, ut ex plurimis diversos flores carpam, non tam probaturus omnia, quam quæ bona sunt electurus, assumo multos in manus meas, ut a multis multa cognoscam, secundum illud quod scriptum est: *Omnia legentes: quæ bona sunt retinentes.*

Unde satis miror te voluisse Origenis mihi objicere dogmata, cujus in plerisque errorem usque ad hanc ætatem penitus ignoras. Egone*

*Al. *Apollinarem.* Quomodo legendi libri Hæreticorum.

1 Thess. v. 21.

*Al. *Ergone*, MS. D.

* 1 Thess. v. 21.

A. D. 396.

His notice of Vigilantius's journey to Egypt.

have either unwillingly subscribed against your opinion and your tongue—which speaks differently, and so you are a shuffler; or willingly, and so an heretic. You have forsaken Egypt; you have abandoned all the provinces in which many bold-faced persons defend your opinions; and you have selected, as an object of persecution, me, who reprehend all doctrines contrary to the Church, and publicly condemn them by my voice.

'2. So Origen is an heretic. What is that to me? for I do not deny that in many points he is an heretic. He has erred concerning the resurrection of the body, he has erred about the condition of souls, about the repentance of the devil; and, what is more than these, he has declared in his Commentaries upon Isaiah, that the Son of God and the Holy Ghost are the Seraphim. Did not I say that he has erred, and did not I daily anathematize these things, I should be a partaker of that error. For we ought not to receive what he has well said, in such manner as to be compelled to accept also what he has said amiss. But

hæreticus? et cur me quæso hæretici non amant? Tu orthodoxus? Qui etiam contra sententiam tuam, et linguam alia prædicantem, aut invitus subscripsisti et prævaricator es: aut volens, et hæreticus. Dimisisti Ægyptum, cunctas provincias reliquisti, in quibus sectam tuam, libera plerique fronte defendunt: et elegisti me ad insectandum, qui omnia contra Ecclesiam dogmata reprehendo; et publica voce condemno. Origenes hæreticus: quid ad me, qui illum in plerisque hæreticum non nego? Erravit de resurrectione corporis*; erravit de animarum statu, de diaboli pœnitentia: et quod his majus est, Filium Dei et Spiritum Sanctum in Commentariis Isaiæ, Seraphim esse testatus est. Si errasse non dicerem eum, et hæc quotidie non anathematizarem, essem erroris illius socius.

Hæretici non amabant Hieronymum.

Nota hæc de invita subscriptione.

Origenis errores.

*Al. *corporum*, ed. V.

A. D. 392.

Explains the use made of Origen's works by himself and others.

this same Origen has well interpreted the Scriptures in many parts, and has examined obscure places of the Prophets, and has revealed very great mysteries as well of the New Testament as of the Old. If, therefore, I have translated the good, and have either cut off or corrected the bad, or kept silence about it, am I to be accused because through me the Latins possess the good parts, and know nothing about the bad? If this be a crime, let the confessor Hilarius be accused, who has translated from Greek into Latin the interpretation of the Psalms and the Homilies upon Job, from this man's writings. Let Eusebius of Vercelli be as confessedly blameworthy, who translated into our language Commentaries upon the Psalms, written by an heretic, although he translated all the best portions only, and passed over whatever was heretical. I say nothing about Victorinus Petabionensis, and others, who have followed and reproduced Origen, in his explanation only of the Scriptures, lest I should appear,

Neque enim ita debemus bona ejus recipere, ut mala quoque suscipere cogamur. At idem et Scripturas in multis bene interpretatus est; et Prophetarum obscura disseruit; et tam novi quam veteris Testamenti revelavit maxima sacramenta. Si igitur quæ bona sunt, transtuli; et mala, vel amputavi, vel correxi, vel tacui; arguendus sum, cur per me Latini bona ejus habeant, et mala ignorent?

Multa bene interpretatus est Origenes.

Si hoc crimen est, arguatur Confessor Hilarius, qui Psalmorum interpretationem et Homilias in Job ex libris ejus, id est, ex Græco in Latinum, transtulit. Sit in culpa ejusdem confessionis Vercellensis Eusebius, qui omnium Psalmorum Commentarios hæretici hominis vertit in nostrum eloquium: licet hæretica prætermittens, optima quæque transtulerit. Taceo de Victorino Pictabionensi*, et cæteris qui Origenem in explanatione dumtaxat Scripturarum sequuti sunt, et

Hilarius.

Eusebius Vercell.

*Al. *Petabionensi*, ed. V. Victorinus Pictabion.

A. D. 398.

not so much to defend myself, as to be looking about for companions in my accusation.

Retorts upon Vigilantius, and sneers at his transcripts of Origen.

'But now to come to yourself: how do you happen to possess transcripts of Origen's treatise upon Job, in which, arguing against the devil, and about the stars and the heaven, he says things which the Church does not receive? Is it permitted to your wise head alone to pass judgment upon all writers, both Greek and Latin, and with your censor's condemnatory mark, so to speak, to eject some from the libraries, and to admit others? And when you pronounce me at your pleasure either a catholic or a heretic, shall not I be permitted to reject what is wrong, and to condemn what I have often condemned? Read my books to the Ephesians, read my other treatises, especially my Commentaries upon Ecclesiastes, and you will clearly perceive that from my youth I have never been so frightened by the authority of any one, as to yield my assent to heretical pravity.

'3. It is a great point to be aware of one's igno-

expresserunt: ne non tam me defendere, quam socios criminis videar quærere. Ad teipsum veniam: cur tractatus ejus in Job descriptos habes, in quibus contra diabolum, et de stellis cœloque disputans, quædam loquutus est, quæ Ecclesia non recipit? Tibi soli licet τῷ σοφωτάτῳ κρανίῳ, de cunctis, et Græcis et Latinis Tractatoribus ferre sententiam, et quasi censoria virgula, alios ejicere de bibliothecis, alios recipere? et quum tibi placuerit, me vel Catholicum, vel Hæreticum pronunciare: nobis non licet perversa respuere, et damnare quod sæpe damnavimus? Lege ad Ephesios libros, lege cætera opuscula nea, et maxime in Ecclesiasten Commentarios: et liquido pervidebis, ne ab adolescentia numquam alicujus auctoritate deterritum acquiesse hæreticæ pravitati.

Sapientissimum cranium, id est, cerebrum.

Numquam acquievit deterritus hæreticæ pravitati.

Non parum est scire quid nescias: prudentis hominis est nosse

A. D. 398.

Accuses Vigilantius of ignorance and boasting.

rance; it becomes a wise man to know his own capacity, so as not, being excited by the malice of the devil, to make the world the witness of his stupidity. You are inclined, forsooth, to be boastful, and you brag, in your country, that I could not reply to your eloquence, and that I feared in you the acumen of Chrysippus. I am restrained by Christian modesty, and I would not unlock the privacy of my cell, with a sharp discourse. But for this, I could expose all your weakness, which is well known even to children. But these things I leave either to be spoken of, or laughed at by others. I as a Christian, speaking to you as a Christian, beseech you, brother, that you would not aim at being wise above your knowledge, and that you would not make an exhibition of your innocence or your simplicity; or, at all events, that you would not by your pen proclaim those things about which I am silent, and which others understand, although you are ignorant of them; and by your follies make yourself a general laughing-stock. From your childhood you have learned another trade; you have been accustomed

Taunts him with his former pursuits.

mensuram suam, nec zelo diaboli concitatum, imperitiæ suæ cunctum orbem testem facere. Scilicet et gloriari cupis: et* in patria tua jactitas, me non potuisse respondere eloquentiæ tuæ, et acumen in te Chrysippi formidasse. Christiana verecundia teneor, et cellulæ meæ latebras nolo mordaci sermone reserare. Alioqui proferrem ν αρετάων σου καὶ τροπαιοφορίαν, parvulorum quoque voce cantatum. Sed hæc aliis aut loquenda, aut ridenda dimitto. Ego quasi Christianus cum Christiano loquens, obsecro te, frater, ne plus velis sapere, quam sapis: ne vel innocentiam, vel simplicitatem tuam vel certe ea quæ taceo, et te non intelligente, cæteri intelligunt, stylo proferas, et ineptiarum tuarum cunctis cachinnum præbeas. Aliud à parva ætate didicisti:

*Al. at, MS. D.

Erat in cellula Monasterii.

A. D. 398.

another kind of training. The same individual ınot examine both gold coins and the scrip- ·es—both sip wines and understand the Apostles ıl the Prophets. You pull me to pieces; you ːuse of heresy my holy brother Oceanus; the lgment of the presbyters Vincentius and Pau- ıianus, and of brother Eusebius, displeases you. ›u are the sole Cato, the most eloquent of the ›man nation; and you would have yourself lieved upon your own authority and for your own ıdence. Remember, I pray you, the day when, I was preaching about the true resurrection the body, you leaped from one side, and praised ː by clapping your hands and stamping with ur feet, and proclaimed that I was orthodox. But ːer you began to be at sea, the stench of the ge-water struck to your inmost brain, and then u remembered that I was an heretic. What n I do for you? I gave credence to the letters the holy presbyter Paulinus, and did not agine that his judgment of you was erroneous. ıd although immediately that I received the

Alludes to a transaction at Bethlehem, and to the opinion entertained of Vigilantius by Paulinus.

ȝ assuetus es disciplinis. Non est ejusdem hominis, et aureos nmos et Scripturas probare; et degustare vina, et Prophetas, vel ostolos intelligere. Me laceras: sanctum fratrem Oceanum in pam hæreseos vocas: Presbyterorum tibi Vincentii et Pauliniani, fratris Eusebii judicium displicet. Solus es Cato Romani generis ːrtissimus, qui testimonio tuo et prudentiæ velis credi.

Cauponiam artem exercebat Vigilantius.

ȶecordare quæso illius diei quando me de resurrectione et veritate poris prædicante, ex latere subsultabas, et plaudebas manu et applo- as pedem*, et orthodoxum conclamabas. Postquam navigare ›isti: et ad intimum cerebrum tuum sentinæ putredo pervenit, c nos hæreticos recordatus es. Quid tibi faciam? Credidi sancti ·sbyteri Paulini Epistolis; et illius super nomine tuo non putavi ıre judicium. Et licet statim accepta Epistola ἀσυνάρτητον sermonem

*Al. *pede*, MS. D.

Crediderat Hieronymus testimonio Paulini.

A. D. 396.

letter, I noticed that your conversation was unpolished, yet I thought there was more of clownishness and simplicity in you than of folly. Nor do I blame the holy man; for he thought it better to conceal from me what he knew, than to accuse his poor retainer by letters of which that person himself was to be the bearer. But I do reprove myself for yielding to the judgment of another rather than to my own, and that I trusted the account given by the letter, rather than that other which my own eyes perceived.

Refers to the manner in which Vigilantius employed his time and wealth.

'4. Cease then to annoy me, and to overwhelm me with your writings. At least save your money, with which you are hiring scribes and copyists, and are employing them both as clerks and partisans; for, perhaps, they praise you that they may profit by your writing. If you are inclined to exercise your talents, give up yourself to grammar and rhetoric, learn logic, become acquainted with the opinions of the philosophers; so that when you have learned all, you may then at least begin to be silent. Yet perhaps I am doing a foolish

tuum intelligerem: tamen rusticitatem et simplicitatem magis in te arbitrabar, quam vecordiam. Nec reprehendo sanctum virum. Maluit enim apud me dissimulare quod noverat, quam portitorem clientulum suis litteris accusare. Sed memetipsum arguo, qui alterius potius acquievi, quam meo judicio: et oculis aliud cernentibus, aliud schedulæ credidi quam videbam.

Laudat prudentiam S. Paulini.

Carpit lepide imperitiam Vigilantii.

Quamobrem desine me lacessere, et voluminibus tuis obruere. Parce saltem nummis tuis, quibus notarios librariosque conducens, eisdem et Scriptoribus uteris et fautoribus: qui te ideo forsitan laudant, ut lucrum in scribendis faciant. Si libet exercere ingenium: trade te Grammaticis atque Rhetoribus: disce dialecticam: sectis instruere Philosophorum: et quum omnia didiceris, saltem tunc tacere incipias.

thing in seeking masters for him who is every one's master, and am prescribing moderation to a person who knows not how to speak, and cannot hold his tongue. The Greek proverb is true, Ὄνῳ λύρα. In my opinion your name has been given you out of opposition, κατ' ἀντίφρασιν, for your whole mind slumbers, and you are snoring, not so much in a deep sleep, as in a lethargy. For among other blasphemies which you have uttered with your sacrilegious mouth, you have dared to say that the mountain mentioned in Daniel, from which the stone was cut out without hands, is the devil, and that the stone is Christ, because He having assumed a body from Adam (who formerly had adhered to the devil by sin,) was born of the Virgin, that He might separate man from the mountain, that is, from the devil. Such a tongue ought to be cut out, and torn into morsels and shreds. Would any Christian understand God the Father Almighty under the figure of the devil, and pollute the ears of the whole world by so great a crime? If any

A. D. 398.

Scurrilities.

Accuses Vigilantius of a false and blasphemous interpretation of Scripture

Quamquam stulte faciam, magistro cunctorum magistros quærere: et ei modum imponere qui loqui nescit; et tacere non potest. Verum est illud apud Græcos proverbium, ὄνῳ λύρα. Ego reor, et nomen tibi κατ' ἀντίφρασιν impositum. Nam tota mente dormitas, et profundissimo non tam somno stertis, quam lethargo. Inter cæteras quippe blasphemias, quas ore sacrilego protulisti, ausus es dicere: montem de quo abscissus est in Daniele lapis sine manibus, esse diabolum; et lapidem Christum: Qui quia assumsit corpus ex Adam, qui diabolo ante per vitia cohæserat, natum esse de Virgine: ut a monte, hoc est, a diabolo hominem separaret. O præcidendam linguam, ac per partes et frusta lacerandam. Quisquamne Christianus Deum Patrem Omnipotentem in persona diaboli interpretatur; et tanto piaculo, totius orbis aures maculat? Si interpretationem tuam, quisquam non

Daniel ii. Blasphemia Vigilantii in Danielis interpretatione.

A.D. 396. individual whatever, I will not say Catholic, but heretic or heathen, ever admitted your interpretation, then let what you have said be considered godly. But if the Church of Christ has never heard such impiety, and if by your mouth he, who said, 'I shall be like the Highest,' has for the first time signified that he himself is the mountain,—then do penance, live in sackcloth and ashes, and wash away so great a crime by incessant tears, if indeed this impiety may be forgiven you; and (according to the error of Origen), you may obtain pardon when the Devil shall obtain it, who appears never to have spoken more blasphemy than by your mouth. I have patiently borne the injury done to myself, but I have not been able to bear your impiety against God. I have appeared, therefore, to write more severely towards the end of my letter than I promised, although after your former repentance, in which you begged my pardon, it is very foolish to have given you a second place for repentance.

dicam Catholicorum, sed Hæreticorum sive Gentilium umquam recepit: pium sit quod loquutus es. Sin autem tantum nefas numquam audivit Christi Ecclesia: et per tuum primum os, ipse se montem
xiv. interpretatus est, qui dixerat: *ero similis Altissimo:* age pœnitentiam, in sacco versare et cinere: et tantum scelus jugibus absterge lachrymis; si tamen tibi dimittatur hæc impietas; et juxta errorem Origenis tunc veniam consequaris: quando consequuturus est et diabolus, qui numquam plus quam per os tuum deprehenditur blasphemasse. Meam
ietatem injuriam patienter tuli. Impietatem contra Deum ferre non potui.
a Deum Unde et visus sum mordacius in extremo Epistolæ scribere, quam
potuit promiseram: quamquam post priorem pœnitentiam, qua a me veniam
Hier- deprecatus es; iterum commisisse unde agas pœnitentiam, stolidissimum
nus.

May Christ vouchsafe to you that you may hear and be silent, that you may understand, and so speak.' A. D. 398.

[Mr. Stevenson's translation is from the text of the edition of Vallarsius, Verona, 1734, vol. i. p. 345.]

Our first inquiry as to this extraordinary letter must be, When was it written? Much depends on its date. It is however very difficult to settle the exact chronology of any of Jerome's epistles; and after all the attention given to the subject by Tillemont and Pagi, who made it their express business to correct the dates of Baronius and other ecclesiastical writers, many questions still remain unsettled.

Examination of Jerome's letter to Vigilantius. Its date.

Jerome's epistle to Vigilantius (numbered 36, alias 75), was certainly not only written, but put in circulation before the first 'Invectives of Rufinus against Jerome;' because Rufinus cites in that treatise one of the sentences contained in the letter now under discussion *. Pagi † shows that this Book of Invectives was published in the year 399, consequently Jerome's letter could not have been penned so late as 400, as Vastel has asserted. Tillemont gives his reasons for believing that it was written a little before or a little after

sit. Tribuat tibi Christus, ut audias et taceas: ut intelligas, et sic loquaris.

Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. pp. 275—8, Benedictine edition, Paris, 1706.

* 'Ipse vero Orientalis Magister qui ad Vigilantium scribens dixerat "*per me Latini cognoscunt omnes Origenis bona, et ignorant mala.*"'—Comp. Hier. Op. 4. ii. 276 and 374.

† Pagi. Hist. Crit. Chron. sub anno 399, vol. ii. p. 28.

A. D. 398.

the reconciliation between Jerome and Rufinus, which took place in 397. I venture to hazard an opinion that it may be assigned to the latter end of the year 398, and for this reason. According to Tillemont, the epistle addressed by Jerome to Pammachius and Oceanus, in explanation of his sentiments and conduct in relation to Origen, was written in 398. Now the treatise of Vigilantius, which called forth Jerome's letter to him (as far as we can judge from Jerome's allusions to the contents of that letter), was composed after the monk of Bethlehem had explained himself to his two friends; and had reference to the very arguments which Jerome used in his correspondence with them. One passage in particular is strong evidence in favour of my date. 'You pull me to pieces,' said Jerome, 'You accuse my holy brother, Oceanus, of heresy, and the judgment of the holy presbyters Vincentius and Paulinianus, and of brother Eusebius, displeases you.'* These four persons distinguished themselves by their defence of Jerome on the Origenist question at Rome, in 398, and were sent thither, according to Rufinus, for that purpose :† but they met there accidentally.

It is creditable to Vigilantius to have it to say in his behalf, that he did not rush hastily into a controversy with Jerome about Origen; that he spent nearly two years in preparation before he wrote his treatise; and that the subject of it was a suspicion strongly entertained not only by the adver-

* Hier. Op. 4. ii. p. 277. † Tillemont, 12, p. 215.

saries of the great master, whom he called a sect ready to defend the opinions of Vigilantius, but by many of his friends also. 'Clear yourself of these suspicions; and convict those of error who accuse you; lest if you withhold the expression of your true sentiments, you appear to acquiesce in the charges brought against you.' Such was the language of two of his adherents,* one of whom, Pammachius, had previously urged him to suppress his treatise against Jovinian, because it exposed him to unpleasant imputations.

A. D. 398.

Vigilantius did not rashly enter into a controversy with Jerome.

Full of rancour was Jerome's answer to Vigilantius, in the epistle which we have now before us, and yet there is but little to extract from it to the dishonour of the Gaul, even in the absence of his own account of the quarrel. Jerome admits that Origen had been a favourite author with him, that he had praised him, and that he had been the means of making his Homilies known to Latin readers: he acknowledges also that Origen had promulgated some dangerous errors. And yet he is full of indignation because his Gallic censor questioned the prudence of his conduct in that matter, and argued that one who commended a heretic to notice, and promoted the circulation of some of his opinions, without putting the unwary upon their guard, was doing disservice to the cause of religion.

The virulence of Jerome's letter to Vigilantius.

Vigilantius, in the heat of the controversy, may have uttered many things which were unbecom-

* Hier. Op. 4. ii. p. 341.

A. D. 398.

ing; but this unhappily was a sin common to all the polemics of that age. He is accused by his angry adversary of having blown hot and cold, of shuffling, of subscribing to sentiments in regard to this dispute one day, which he denied or retracted another day. If he did so, I feel no inclination to defend him; but it must be remembered that we have nothing but an opponent's version of the whole story. This version tells us, and I believe it, that Vigilantius had raised the question in Jerome's presence, and that he had been overpowered by the great doctor's rhetoric and superior knowledge of Scripture. Was it not therefore wise in the Gallic presbyter to retire to his own country, and to procure copies of Origen's works, as they had been translated by Jerome and others, and to examine the matter thoroughly, before he agitated it again? '*How do you happen to possess transcripts of Origen's treatises upon Job?*' This was asked tauntingly, but it gives us just the sort of information that we want. Vigilantius was a collector of theological writings, '*both Greek and Latin*,' and he spent his money in forming a library, and his time in studying the books of which it was composed.

We have Jerome's account only of the controversy.

Vindication of Vigilantius.

Supra, p. 344.

Vigilantius is accused of boasting in his own country that his eloquence had silenced Jerome: if he did so, he was acting the part of a silly braggart; and we trust he was humbled by the old man's rebuke; that he took his counsel in good part, and as a Christian began to think more humbly of himself, and to devote himself more

p. 345.

and more to divine contemplation. It is probable that he did so; for it was above four years ere the Gaul wrote another treatise, and this interval, we have every reason to hope, was passed studiously and thoughtfully. A.D. 398.

'*Remember, I pray you, the day when I was preaching on the resurrection of the body, how you leaped from my side, and praised me by clapping your hands and stamping with your feet, and proclaimed that I was orthodox.*' I have already made some remarks on this passage (see p. 312), which bears witness to the ingenuous disposition of the man whom Jerome vilified. This vehement action, in approbation of a sacred discourse, so discordant with our notions of decorum, was very common in those days, and was tolerated even down to the time of St. Bernard. It was one of the many improper concessions to pagan customs which disgraced the Church of the Fathers. Chrysostom, in his Homilies, alludes to it very frequently, sometimes with complacency, but for the most part with censure. Augustine mentions the practice without condemning it; and so does Gregory Nazianzen. Jerome, in other places, incidentally remarks on similar expressions of boisterous approbation, as matters of ordinary occurrence *. p. 346.

Another part of Jerome's epistle is one which his warmest admirers have blushed to read.

* The reader who would know more of this custom will find a curious description of it in 'Grævii Thesaurus Antiquitatum,' vol. vi. de Vet. Accl. lib. v.

A. D. 398.

Jerome's ungenerous allusions to the birth-place and former pursuits of Vigilantius. pp. 345, 346.

'*From your childhood you have learnt another trade. You have been accustomed to another kind of training. The same individual cannot examine both gold coins and the Scriptures—cannot both sip wines, and understand the Apostles and the Prophets.*' Vigilantius had been trained to scriptural knowledge by Sulpicius and Paulinus. He had lived in the most familiar and friendly intimacy with two men, who scarcely ever spoke or wrote without using a Biblical phrase. It was said of him that he was '*pernecessarius*'* to Paulinus, who spake of him in the very terms, which he employed to express his affection for his beloved friend Sulpicius †. '*One who sips wine*'—this was an insinuation of more or less severity, accordingly as it meant to impute a profession or a habit to Vigilantius. If it was only intended to signify that the Gaul had been brought up in a tavern or a vineyard, let it pass: controversialists cannot refrain from indulging in this kind of sarcasm: but if it intimated that Vigilantius was an habitual and intemperate wine-drinker, the inconsistency of the charge appears on the face of the letter which contains it—'*I as a Christian, speaking to you as a Christian!*' Let this admission be compared with subsequent scurrilities. Equally inconsistent is the petulant sentence which asserted that the same person could '*not examine gold coins and the Scriptures*,' for it is stated in the same page that the Gaul's gold was employed in the pur-

p. 345.

The inconsistency of his invectives.

* Baronius. 5. 275. Pagi. 2. 73.

† See p. 168.

A. D. 398.

chase and circulation of books, some of which must have been books of sacred literature. '*At least save your money, with which you are hiring scribes and copyists, and are employing them as clerks and* p. 347. *partisans, for perhaps they praise you that they may profit by your writings.*' The next passage in the epistle recommends Vigilantius '*to give himself up to grammar, and rhetoric, and philosophy.*' Sacred writings and sacred studies, therefore, occupied the Gallic presbyter at Calagorris; and thus did he qualify himself, and those among whom he circulated his transcriptions, to examine the corrupt novelties in faith and discipline, which the Fathers of the fourth century were introducing into the church.

Jerome admits that Vigilantius was employed in sacred studies.

The general ignorance and unpolished style of Vigilantius were favourite subjects of Jerome's invectives, not only in this epistle, but in other places also, when he took occasion to speak of him. Gennadius, however, who lived about a century afterwards, and may have seen some of the writings of Vigilantius, gave him credit for eloquence, and allowed that his works were admired *. Erasmus has observed, with great justice, that the sentences which Jerome has quoted from the works of the Gaul do not by any means betray defects of style †.

* 'Scripsit et ipse, religionis quidem zelo, aliqua; sed seductus humana laude, et præsumens supra vires suas, homo lingua politus, consensu scripturarum exercitatus, exposuit pravo ingenio visionem Danielis, et alia locutus est frivola, quæ in Catalogo hæreticorum ponuntur.'—Gennadii. Catal. 35.

† Erasmi Op. vol. iii. f. 55. cited by Bebel, Ant. 3, p. 323.

A. D. 398. 348.

'*The Greek proverb is true* (Ὄνῳ λύρα*) *in application to you.*'—'What is the lyre to an ass?' This was one of the monk's severe remarks at the expense of his adversary; and he follows it up by a sorry joke upon his name, which he says was given to him *by antiphrasis, because of his dull and sleepy nature.* The charge which follows is of a more serious nature, and should be received with great hesitation. '*The mountain mentioned in Daniel, from which the stone was cut without hands, is the devil, and that stone is Christ, because he having assumed a body from Adam, who formerly had adhered to the devil by sin, was born of the Virgin, that he might separate man from the mountain, that is from the devil.*' Vigilantius is accused of giving this wild interpretation to the passage in Daniel, chap. ii. 34, 35, 45. We have not his own words; we have not his explanation of the construction which he put on the prophecy; we have nothing but his opponent's allegation, and the slight allusion made to it by Gennadius; we can therefore only admit that if such was our Presbyter's exposition of Scripture at this period of his history, he was then totally unfit to expound the word of God. He was asleep and dreaming, and he required all the time and attention which he afterwards gave

ere is son to ıbt the th of ome's st serious urge inst Vi- antius.

* There are several forms in which this proverb is written. '"Ονος λύρας subaudi ἀκροατὴς, i.e. *Asinus lyræ auscultator.*'—'Τί γὰρ κοινὸν, φάσι, λύρᾳ καὶ ὄνῳ; *Quid enim commercii, quod dici solet, asino cum lyra?*'—'"Ονος λύρας ἤκουσε, καὶ σάλπιγος ὗς; *Asinus lyram auscultavit et porcus tubam.*' See Erasmi. Adagior. 35. Opera. Er. 2. p. 164. 'Asino quippe Lyra superflue canit.' See Hier. 4. ii. p, 61.

to sacred subjects, before he could venture again to open his mouth, and to use his writing-tablets as a commentator on any portion of holy writ. But I hesitate not to maintain that there must be some gross mis-statement or exaggeration. The extravagant absurdity of this interpretation is totally unlike the general character of the man's exposition of Scripture. His acceptation of the word of God, to judge from his rejection of the theories of Origen, and from his horror of Jerome's apparent leaning to them, was the very reverse of that which is here imputed to him. It was plain, sober-minded, and unvisionary, and was marked by a rigid adherence to the dictates of common sense and sound reasoning. A. D. 398.

I entreat the reader to examine Jerome's account of the matter, both in the original Latin, and in Mr. Stevenson's close and literal translation, and he will find marks of hearsay and calumnious imputation, which rests on no good authority.

Jerome does not say that it was an interpretation found in the *writings* of Vigilantius, but a something that he had uttered with his mouth. 'For among the blasphemies *which you have uttered with your sacrilegious mouth*, you have dared *to say* that the mountain,' &c.

'Such *a tongue* ought to be cut out, and torn in morsels and shreds.' 'The devil never appears to have *spoken* more blasphemy than by your *mouth*.' There is not the slightest evidence that Jerome had *read* any treatise avowed by Vigilantius, con-

A. D. 398. taining the pretended exposition. Gennadius mentions it on the authority of Jerome only, and the expression he uses is 'alia *locutus* est frivola.' 'He *spoke* other foolish things.' Jerome does not repeat the accusation in any of his invectives afterwards*: we may therefore dismiss it as an empty and ridiculous piece of slander, which is unsupported by direct or indirect testimony, and which has not the least shadow of probability to rest on. The angry monk, whose cell was open to every sort of gossip brought by travellers and pilgrims from the West, received a story which he would have been ashamed to record, had not his temper been soured by controversy and asceticism. He exhausted, in his epistle to the maligned Gaul, every epithet in the vocabulary of abuse: he had recourse to proverbs and figures of speech to enable him to pronounce his opponent a fool and an ass, and a sleepy blockhead; and he concludes by raking up a tale, told him by he could not remember whom, in order that he might stamp 'sacrilegious blasphemer' on the brow of a man whose reputation he was assailing, and whose name has been handed down to posterity as a *heretic* †, on no other contemporary authority than

* I am inclined to think, that when Rufinus accused Jerome of bringing a slanderous accusation against Vigilantius, which he dare not repeat, he referred to this:—'Quando testimonium de Scripturis in eum tam injuriose posuisti, ut ego id repetere meo ore non audeam.' —Hier. Op. 4. ii. 457.

† It is unwise to allow ourselves to be prejudiced against the 'Remonstrants' of the fourth and fifth centuries, by the loose invectives of Jerome and his followers. Vigilantius figures in Rome's Catalogue

own. The exhortation to repentance, which A. D. 398.
me appended to his epistle, proves the state
ind in which he wrote it.' *Do penance, that*
*may obtain pardon when the devil shall* p. 249.
*in it.*'

uch was the holiness of this 'holy and happy
.'

*eretics.* Jerome is the principal witness against him. See his nentary on Isaiah. Jerome there speaks of '*the Heretics who lately g up under their stupid master in Gaul:*' meaning Vigilantius. 'etici, quales nuper sub magistro cerebroso in Gallia pullularunt.' Op. 3. p. 482, in Isai. c. 65. But in his Commentary on Hosea, ame consistent Doctor assures us, that '*no man can construct a y, but he who is of an ardent genius, and has the gifts of nature i are implanted in him by God.*' 'Nullus enim potest hæresim re, nisi qui ardentis ingenii est, et habet dona naturæ quæ a Deo e sunt creata.'—Ibid. in Ose. c. x. p. 1301. The Benedictine rs mark this passage with their marginal notes—'*Hæretici habent en ingenii.*' '*Doctissimi Hæretici.*' If Vigilantius was not only retic, but the founder of a sect of Heretics, how could he be the ind ass which Jerome has represented him to be in this Epistle?

## CHAP. XVII.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 398-404.

Vigilantius in Aquitain.

THE letter of Jerome, contained in the last chapter, had no relation to the opinions which Vigilantius afterwards propagated in Gaul; we are therefore to infer that he had not yet publicly assailed the worship of relics, vigils at the graves of the martyrs, and other corrupt practices, which were then occupying the attention of the devout, more than the indispensable truths of the gospel. The controversies on topics connected with the errors of Origen, the collection and value of relics, and the meritorious performances of monks and hermits, fill so many of the pages of the ecclesiastical writers who were flourishing at the end of the fourth century, that it is evident the doctrine of Christ's full and perfect satisfaction was not sufficiently brought into prominent view.

Fanaticism in all its forms had pushed sober piety out of place, and we scarcely know where to look for a description of that humble and useful Christian character, in the midst of busy life and

social duties, which is so common in our own times.* We are attempting to follow Vigilantius into his native country, at the southern extremity of Aquitain, which at this period comprised the Novempopulania, and the Narbonnese, and we feel the want of the details necessary to explain the life he led, and the principles on which he endeavoured to introduce a reform into the church. Now it is, when he was about to declare himself, in protestation against corruptions which had become universal, that we are craving to learn with whom he associated; by what steps he advanced: what course of reading, what train of thought, and what process of reasoning enabled him to come conspicuously forward, as an opponent of Jerome in a new field of discussion. But we have not enough to gratify our curiosity, and, in the loss of his own writings, we can only pick our way cautiously through those of the author who has maligned him. After the Epistle of Jerome, which I have dated A.D. 398, we hear nothing more of him until the year 404, when the complaint of some neighbouring priests drew forth the monk's letter to Riparius, in which Vigilantius is accused of inveighing against the homage paid to the ashes and sepulchres of the martyrs.

A. D. 398-404

How was occupied?

* I cannot refrain from quoting a beautiful passage from 'Ancient Christianity,' in which the domestic condition of the Roman Christianized world in the fifth century is compared with our own. 'No single indication does he (Salvian) furnish of the existence around him, or anywhere within his knowledge, of domestic Christian purity, spirituality, and peace. Nothing like that which, thank God! adorns and blesses thousands and tens of thousands of British Protestant homes.'—No. v. p. 63.

A. D. 398-404.

The bare fact, that so long an interval elapsed before he re-appeared on the stage of controversy, is favourable to his character. It shows that, feeling incompetent to agitate theological questions without better preparation for the discussion, he suffered himself to be silenced by the tirade of Jerome, and was several years in training ere he ventured to resume the contest. On every previous occasion he had exhibited the same diffidence, and was slow to avow sentiments in opposition to those of the persons whom he was accustomed to respect. Jerome's insinuation (page 346) that Paulinus suspected him of entertaining notions unlike those which prevailed at Nola, and that he himself had some reason to be dissatisfied with Vigilantius at Bethlehem: his complaint that Vigilantius was stirred up by Rufinus to engage in the Origenist dispute;—the readiness of Vigilantius to retract his words, and to ask pardon for what he had said in disparagement of Jerome; and his uncontrolled delight when he heard Jerome discourse like an orthodox Christian on the resurrection of the body;—his retirement of twelve months, and his study of that subject, before he undertook to write upon it;—and now again his hesitation of several years before he protests publicly against what he believed to be superstitious folly;—all this proves that our Gallic reformer was not a rash declaimer, but a calm and thoughtful remonstrant. We may therefore fairly give him credit for fortifying himself by prayer and scriptural research, and by the counsel of good men, before he undertook

'he diffi- ence of Vi- ilantius.

to enter the lists against the doughty champions, who were arrayed on the side of spiritual abuses. A. D. 398-404.

The political, religious, and moral condition of Aquitain at this crisis.

I will take advantage of this pause in the history of Vigilantius, to survey the province in which he was residing, and to see if there was anything in its political, religious, and moral condition to shock the feelings of the presbyter, who had been trained in the virtuous school of Sulpicius and Paulinus: and to direct him at the same time to something deeper and more satisfying than the system, on which he had hitherto been taught to rely for safety in the hour of temporal and spiritual danger. As the earthquake in Palestine was likely to have acted upon his conscience through his fears, so may the aspect of public affairs, and the fast coming judgments of God, have been of a kind to excite apprehensions for himself and his fellow-countrymen, and to urge him to hasten for his life, and to plant his foot on a firmer foundation of hope, both for time and eternity, than that which the veneration of dead men's bones, and vigils at the graves of martyrs, could afford.

Calagorris was so situated, that its inhabitants could take shelter at the shortest notice in mountain retreats known only to themselves: they could retire into the caverns of rocks or coverts of forests inaccessible to the stranger: they could also descend in a few hours into the plains, and be in the midst of all the salubrity and beauty of the finest climate and the richest productions. The orange and the lemon have perhaps been

The climate of Aquitain.

A. D. 398-404.

introduced since; but it was a 'land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills: a land of wheat and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates: a land of oil olive, and honey,' of flowers and aromatic shrubs: a land where they ate bread without scarceness, and where cattle, game, and fish, venison and wild-fowl furnished the chase and the table with a never-failing supply. Into this delicious region the native of the Pyrenean border could transport himself at pleasure, or he could stand on the last slope of the mountain ridge, which overhangs the Garonne and its tributary streams, and delight his eye with the vales, which stretched towards Tholouse, and glistened under the brightest of suns and clearest of skies. That part of the province, of which Thoulouse was the capital, had become one of the most licentious of the whole Roman empire; and while its affluence was offering a tempting prize to the barbarian invaders, who were now hovering over this part of Gaul, the effeminacy of the people, and their total inability to resist a hostile force, exposed them a helpless prey to the first horde that should pour down upon them. The empire of the Cæsars was fast breaking up. The imperial government held its reins with a feeble hand: the provincial officers were utterly unworthy of the trust committed to them: the nobles were selfish, and devoted to their own indulgences: the people were indolent, and indifferent to every feeling of patriotism: the legionary troops had neither discipline nor motive

Licentiousness of the inhabitants.

kind to give them confidence either in the
or field. Consequently public spirit was
, and the people, who expected every day
their houses plundered and their lands laid
were living like gamblers and desperate
ates, who were resolved to make the most
present hour. A singular proof had been
about this time, of the utter degeneracy of
ce celebrated Roman legions. They com-
l of their defensive armour, and insisted on
the heavy helmet, shield, and cuirass
d for lighter panoply. What could such
y do to arrest the torrent which was rolling
s the south of Europe? Greece had already
avaged: the northern Alps had been sur-
ed by the invader's daring foot, and nothing
ble to prevent an irruption into the seven
ces of Gaul. The panic had begun, and
ghtful forms of death and abomination,
none could avert, were seen from afar off.
his crisis, very different was the conduct of
s professors of Christianity and ministers of
spel. Some of the latter, disgusted by the
l depravity, desirous of flying from the
ion of evil, or alarmed for their personal
had deserted their parochial charges and
n themselves to the monasteries. Others
ecome negligent and careless, and were
ed in the common vortex of iniquity.
of the laics, who were religiously disposed,
no had no spiritual guidance to keep them
right way, separated themselves from their

A. D. 398-404.

State of religion.

A. D. 398-404.

domestic and social ties, put away their wives, abandoned their children, and professing a new kind of abstinence, occasioned great scandal to the name of Christianity. Abandonment of some sort seemed to be the universal infatuation. The licentious, and they who cared nothing about religion, were given over to work all uncleanness with greediness. The pious were not satisfied with the precepts of the law and the gospel, but tried to find out for themselves a more perfect way, and sought new means of propitiating the Divine wrath, of gaining for themselves supernatural protectors, and of appeasing a God, who, as they were taught to believe, was not satisfied with the sacrifice of his only-begotten Son. The uncontradicted accounts of Salvian, a priest of Aquitain, who wrote soon after the dreadful catastrophe had taken place, of which the distant sound of the Gallic trumpet was now the alarum, give a graphic picture of the lovely aspect of the country, contrasted with the deplorable state of public morals.

Salvian's account.

'Who will deny,' said Salvian, 'that the people of Aquitain possessed the very garden of all Gaul, and that they revelled not only in the midst of abundance, but in the enjoyment of what was considered still more precious—pleasure, mirth, and beauty. The whole region bloomed with the vine, or was enamelled with meadows; was divided into well-cultivated fields, or was planted with fruit-trees, or shaded with groves, or irrigated with fountains, or watered by rivers, or waved with

A. D. 398-404.

:n ; so that they appeared to be not merely the ds of the soil, and to have their lot cast in a ɔdly heritage, but to be the possessors of a para- e.'* 'But,' he continues, 'as the people of uitain were the first in riches, so were they the emost of all the Gauls in vice. Nowhere was uptuousness more wanton, conduct more abo- nable, or discipline more relaxed.' †

Salvian had previously declared that his coun- men were unworthy of their gospel privileges ; ıt no part of Christendom was more corrupt ; that :y were worse than the barbarians who had over- ı their land ; ‡ and that their Christian teachers ł not properly inculcated Christian morals.§ me of this writer's sentences present fearful ws of the result of such wickedness. 'And hough they are delivered over to the barbarians, consequence of their impure lives, they do not rect their impurities even in the presence of : barbarians.' 'Can we wonder, if the lands of : Aquitanians, or of all of us, have been given :r to the barbarians by God, when that, which have polluted by our profligacy, the barbarians ve cleansed by their chastity ? '‖

Salvian did not exempt even the monks from s sweeping charge, although he was himself

Salvian de Gubernatione Dei, lib. vii. p. 248. Noribergæ, 1623.
Ibid. p. 250. ‡ Ibid. p. 99. § Ibid. p. 149.
'Cumque ob impurissimam vitam traditi a Deo barbaris fuerint, uritates tamen ipsas etiam inter barbaros non relinquunt.'—Ibid. 52. 'Et miramur, si terræ vel Aquitanorum, vel nostrum omnium eo barbaris datæ sunt ; cum ea quæ Romani polluerant fornica- e, nunc mundent barbari castitate? '—Ibid. p. 254.

A. D. 396-404.

devoted to the monastic institutions. In one place he says, 'I except all the religious,' meaning the monastic fraternities, but in other places he includes clergy and monks, and those who had put away their wives and professed continence and sanctity, in the number of abandoned sinners on whom the wrath of heaven had justly fallen.*

And what was Vigilantius doing while the tempest was lowering, and wars and rumours of wars were heard on the frontiers? He was protesting against the corrupt practices of the superstitious and fanatical. But was that all? I confess my regret that I can do so little towards exhibiting him in the character of a presbyter; and here I may allude again to the disadvantage under which I have laboured throughout the whole of this volume. I have the unthankful and invidious task of pointing out the errors of eminent men, and of introducing a Reformer to my readers, without the power of giving any of those delightful biographical sketches, which render the Reformer's office and pretensions pleasing. I can only vindicate him from the aspersions of his adversaries; and the vindication unfortunately becomes a series of attacks on the principles or dispositions of some of those who have been esteemed Christian saints. Admirable traits of many kinds, holy sayings and doings, anecdotes and characteristics, which command respect and win applause, may be set

Difficulties.

* Compare Salvian, lib. iv. p. 135, with lib. iii. pp. 91—93, and lib. v. pp. 185—7.

against the follies and faults, which the plan of my book forces me to write up against the Jeromes and Martins of the fourth and fifth centuries; while I can only gather here and there a stray flower wherewith to weave a garland for Vigilantius. And this is not the worst of it. I lay myself open to the suspicion, that, while I expose the blemishes of the patristical system, I hate its virtues. But it is not so.* Because the mischievous part of it has been cloaked, and the attempts of those who remonstrate against its errors, and its adaptation to present times, have been misrepresented and decried, therefore the truth of history requires a counter-statement. Such I am attempting to give, fearless of, but not blind to, the misconstruction and censure to which I may be exposing myself. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Christ is the foundation laid. What has been built upon this foundation? Gold, silver, and precious stones; or wood, hay, stubble? This is the inquiry. Truth and light are what we want, and if these be found, and the clouds of doubt and darkness be dispersed, it matters not what system

A.D. 398-404.

* 'Let the Christian philosopher say whether there must not have been some fatal error attaching to a system, which even when worked with all imaginable intensity of purpose, by a man like Augustine, could have had such an issue. The purport of all we are affirming in this controversy is this, not that Cyprian and Augustine were not personally good and zealous men,—those who misrepresent us as affirming any such thing well know that we have carefully respected the reputation of eminent individuals,—but we say that the Church system of the Nicene age was such as *must* bring about, and invariably has brought about, after a little interval, universal profligacy.'—*Ancient Christianity*, No. 5, p. 66.

A.D. 396-404. shall perish, or what hypothesis shall come to an end.

'Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἀλλὰ σὺ ῥῦσαι ὑπ' ἠέρος υἷας Ἀχαιῶν
Ποίησον δ' αἴθρην, δὸς δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδέσθαι·
Ἐν δὲ φάος καὶ ὄλεσσον.'—ILIAD, 17. 645—7.

When the destroying armies of the Goths and Vandals were ravaging Christian Europe, and sparing the house neither of God nor man, the enemies of the gospel said, that they were executing the judgments of heaven upon the professors of a false religion. In reply to this, Salvian wrote his book 'On the Providence of God,' and maintained that the Almighty was not punishing Christians because their religion was untrue, but because they themselves were false to their own principles, and did not act up to the doctrines and spirit of their holy faith. Salvian's argument, therefore, was, that God vindicated his justice in the punishment of unworthy Christians. Mine is, that God at the same time vindicated his mercy, by raising up witnesses of his truth. Among these was Vigilantius, and though we read of him only as one who was held up to hatred for protesting and reasoning against the follies of a system, which produced laxity of morals, and shut up the great majority of professing Christians in ignorance of the pure doctrines of the gospel, yet in spite of the obloquy cast upon him, I believe that he was leading a virtuous and holy life, and that he was not merely remonstrating against error, but was actively promoting godliness. The letters of Jerome admit that there were bishops who took his

The providence of God vindicated.

Vigilantius a witness of the truth.

part, and that the prelate, who presided over the diocese wherein he first promulgated his tenets against relic-worship, did not think it necessary to silence him, but rather acquiesced with him. Moreover, in Jerome's most bitter invectives, not a single proof is offered to show that the once 'holy presbyter' had become an evil-doer, or that there was any ground for branding him as a glutton and a wine-bibber. Surely the unsparing adversary, who raked up everything that could be collected to the discredit of the Gaul, who reviled him for having formerly been a tavern-keeper, who sneered at him for his terror on the night of the earthquake, and taunted him with having been guilty of a false interpretation of scripture, referring with minute particularity to the passage which he had misunderstood: surely, I say, this severe censor would not have omitted the details of time, and place, and circumstance, had Vigilantius really been an offender against the morality or the essential truths of Christianity. But not an instance of immorality or heresy, no, not one is adduced, during the six years that intervened between our presbyter's libel, as it was called, against Jerome, and his Treatise against the prevailing superstitions. It was known that he was spending his money in the collection and transcription of books, and in visiting the churches of Gaul; that he was agitating questions which have since divided Christendom, and was bringing over others to his opinions, which were at variance with those of the most celebrated doctors of the church; and that

A. D. 398-404.

No proof of his being guilty of the delinquencies imputed to him.

A. D. 398-404.

he was in favour with certain bishops: all this was reported by some of the neighbouring priests, who were watching his conduct; and yet not one act of negligence as a minister of the church, nor of profligacy as a man, nor of heterodoxy as a Christian, is recorded to stain his memory. When Jerome had anything bad to tell, he told it freely enough; but the worst that he could say, in the year 402, [when, according to Tillemont and Pagi, he wrote his second, and perhaps, his third, Apology against Rufinus,] was that Vigilantius was a simpleton, urged on by Rufinus to vent his malice against his former friend.* Baronius, with all his asperity, makes this extraordinary remark, that Vigilantius, up to the time when he avowed his repugnance to the veneration of relics, was regarded as a holy man.† As a holy man then he must have lived, and as such he was still living, when Jerome, in reply to some information received from Riparius, a Gallic priest of the diocese of Tholouse, wrote the annexed letter, in the year 404 or 405.

* See Apol. 3, apud Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 457.

† 'Hactenus inter sanctos perfidus latuisset.' Sub. an. 406, vol. v. p. 275. How could the man whom Baronius stigmatises as *stuprator*, *bestia*, *monstrum* (see p. 278) be mistaken for a holy man?

## 'tter of Jerome to Riparius, (37 Al. 53.)* A. D. 404.

venson's translation, from the edition of Vallarsius. Verona, 1734.]

ving received letters from you for the first
not to answer them would be a mark of
to answer them would be rash; for you
)n me about matters which it is sacrilege both
r and to hear. You say that Vigilantius (who
ἀντίφρασιν is so called) is again opening his foul
, and is casting out the vilest nastiness
t the relics of the holy Martyrs, styling us
:ceive them, cinder-gatherers and idolaters,
e we venerate the bones of dead men. Un-
man that he is, and to be lamented with a
fountain of tears, who, in so saying, perceives
it he is a Samaritan and a Jew, who regard
dies of the dead as unclean things, and ima-

## *HIERONYMI EPISTOLA XXXVII.

Alias 53. Scripta anno 404, vel circiter.

### AD RIPARIUM PRESBYTERUM.

tis primum litteris tuis, non respondere, superbiæ est: re-
, temeritatis. De his enim rebus interrogas, quas * et proferre
, sacrilegium est. Ais Vigilantium, qui κατ' ἀντίφρασιν hoc
nomine, (nam Dormitantius rectius diceretur,) os fœtidum
erire, et putorem spurcissimum contra sanctorum Martyrum
reliquias; et nos, qui eas suscipimus, appellare cinerarios et
s, qui mortuorum hominum ossa veneremur. O infelicem
, et omni lachrymarum fonte plangendum; qui hæc dicens,
telligit esse Samaritanum et Judæum, qui corpora mortuorum,

* Al. quæ, ed. V.

Ita in superiori Epistola.

Hoc nomine vocantur Catholici a Calvinistis.

A. D. 404.

gine that even the vessels which are in the same house are polluted; following the letter which killeth, and not the spirit which giveth life. We however do not worship and adore, I do not say the relics of the Martyrs, but even the sun and the moon; we do not worship and adore the Angels, nor the Archangels, nor the Cherubim, nor the Seraphim, nor any name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, lest we serve the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. But we honour the relics of the Martyrs, that we may adore Him Whose Martyrs they are. We honour the servants, that the honour of the servants may redound to the Lord, who says, "He that receiveth you receiveth Me." Are the relics of Peter and Paul therefore unclean? Shall the body of Moses be unclean, which, according to the Hebrew text, was buried by the Lord Himself? And do we venerate the temples of idols, as often as we enter the churches of the Prophets and the Apostles, and of all the martyrs? and are the tapers lit before their tombs the ensigns

pro immundis habent, et etiam vasa quæ in eadem domo fuerint, pollui suspicantur; sequentes occidentem litteram, et non spiritum vivificantem! Nos autem non dico Martyrum reliquias, sed ne solem quidem et lunam, non Angelos, non Archangelos, non Cherubim, non Seraphim, et omne nomen quod nominatur et in præsenti sæculo et in futuro, colimus et adoramus: ne serviamus creaturæ potius quam Creatori, qui est benedictus in sæcula. Honoramus autem reliquias Martyrum, ut eum cujus sunt Martyres adoremus. Honoramus servos, ut honor servorum redundet ad Dominum, qui ait: *Qui vos suscipit, me suscipit.* Ergo Petri et Pauli immundæ sunt reliquiæ? Ergo Moysi corpusculum immundum erit? quod juxta Hebraicam Veritatem ab ipso sepultum est Domino? Et quotiesquumque Apostolorum et Pro-

Quomodo veneramur reliquias sanctorum. Matt. x. 40. Hebraica veritas.

of idolatry? Can I say aught more which may fall back upon the head of the author, and cure or destroy his mad brain, lest the souls of the simple ones should be perverted by such sacrilege? Was the Body, then, of our Lord unclean, when it was placed in the sepulchre? and the angels clothed in white garments, did they watch by a dead and polluted body, that after many centuries Dormitantius should dream, yea even belch forth his most unclean surfeit, and with Julian the persecutor should either destroy the churches of the saints, or convert them into temples? A. D. 404.

'2. I am surprised that the holy bishop, in whose diocese he is said to be a presbyter, should acquiesce in his madness, and should not, with his apostolic rod, his rod of iron, dash in pieces the useless vessel; and deliver him for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved. Let him remember that passage, "When thou Ps. l. 18.

phetarum, et omnium Martyrum Basilicas ingredimur, toties idolorum templa veneramur? accensique ante tumulos eorum cerei, idololatriæ insignia sunt? Plus aliquid dicam, quod redundet in auctoris caput: et insanum cerebrum, vel sanet aliquando, vel deleat; ne tantis sacrilegiis simplicium animæ subvertantur. Ergo et Domini Corpus in sepulcro positum, immundum fuit? Et angeli, qui candidis vestibus utebantur, mortuo cadaveri atque polluto præbebant excubias;* ut post multa sæcula Dormitantius somniaret, immo eructaret immundissimam crapulam: et cum Juliano persecutore, Sanctorum Basilicas aut destrueret, aut in templa converteret? Miror sanctum Episcopum, in cujus parochia esse Presbyter dicitur, acquiescere furori ejus: et non virga Apostolica, virgaque ferrea confringere vas inutile, et tradere in interitum carnis; ut spiritus salvus fiat. Meminerit illius dicti: *Si videbas furem* Ps. xlix. 18.*

Accensi cerei ante tumulos Martyrum.

* Al. *exequias*, MS. D.

* The references to the Psalms in the Latin correspond with the Benedictine edition, and with the Vulgate.

A. D. 404.

sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers." And
Ps. ci. 8. in another place, "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." And again,
Ps. cxxxix. 21, 22. "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee, and am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred." If the relics of the Martyrs be not to be honoured, how
Ps. cxvi. 15. is it that we read, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." If their bones
2 Kings xiii. 21. pollute those who touch them, how did Elisha, when dead, raise up the dead man, and the dead body (which, according to Vigilantius, lay as an unclean thing) give life? Were all the camps of the Israelitish army and of the people of God unclean, because they carried the bodies of Joseph and the patriarchs in the desert? and did they carry unclean cinders into the Holy Land? Joseph also, the typical predecessor of our Lord and Saviour, was he defiled, who with such affection carried the bones of Jacob to Hebron, that he

*currebas cum eo, et cum adulteris portionem tuam ponebas.* Et in alio
Ps. c. 8. loco: *In matutino interficiebam omnes peccatores terræ, ut disperderem*
Ps. cxxxviii. 21, 22. *de civitate Domini omnes operantes iniquitatem.* Et iterum: *Nonne odientes te, Domine, odio habui, et super inimicos tuos tabescebam? Perfecto odio oderam illos.* Si non sunt honorandæ reliquiæ Martyrum,
Ps. cxv. 6. quomodo legimus: *Preciosa in conspectu Domini mors Sanctorum*
4 Reg. 13. *ejus?* Si ossa eorum polluunt contingentes, quomodo Elisæus mor-
* Al. *vitam corpus*, ed. V. tuus, mortuum suscitavit, et dedit vitam* quod juxta Vigilantium jacebat immundum? Ergo omnia castra Israelitici exercitus et populi Dei fuere immunda, quia Joseph et Patriarcharum corpora portabant in solitudine: et ad Sanctam Terram immundos cineres pertulerunt? Joseph quoque, qui in typo præcessit Domini Salvatoris, sceleratus fuit; qui tanta ambitione, Jacob in Hebron ossa portavit; ut immun-

might join his unclean parent to his unclean grandfather and great-grandfather, and couple the dead with the dead? This tongue should be cut off by the surgeons, or rather this mad head should be cured; that he, who knows not how to speak, may learn sometimes to keep silence. I once saw this monster, and wished to bind the madman with Scripture testimonies, as with the chains of Hippocrates; but he went off, he departed, he escaped, he burst forth; and between the billows of the Adriatic and the Cottian Alps he has railingly complained against us. For whatever the madman talks is to be styled bawling and clamour. A. D. 404.

'3. Perhaps you silently in your heart blame me for inveighing against the absent. I will admit to you that I am annoyed. I cannot patiently hear such a sacrilegious person. For I have read of the javelin of Phinehas, of the austerity of Elias, of the zeal of Simon the Canaanite, of the severity of Peter, when he slew Ananias and Sapphira, and of the decision of Paul, who condemned

dum patrem, avo et atavo sociaret immundis, et mortuum mortuis copularet? O præcidenda lingua a medicis; immo insanum curandum caput; ut qui loqui nescit, discat aliquando reticere! Ego, ego vidi hoc aliquando portentum, et testimoniis Scripturarum, quasi vinculis Hippocratis, volui ligare furiosum: sed abiit, excessit, evasit, erupit; et inter Adriæ fluctus, Cottiique regis Alpes, in nos declamando clamavit. Quidquid enim amens loquitur, vociferatio et clamor est appellandus.

Viderat Vigilantium in Palæstina.

Tacita me forsitan cogitatione reprehendas: cur in absentem invehar. Fatebor tibi dolorem meum. Sacrilegium tantum patienter audire non possum. Legi enim seiromasten Phinees, austeritatem Eliæ, zelum Simonis Chananæi, Petri severitatem Ananiam et Sapphiram trucidantis, Paulique constantiam, qui Elymam magum viis Domini resistentem, æterna cæcitate damnavit. Non est crudelitas, pro

Patienter andire non poterat blasphemias Hæreticorum.

A. D. 404.

to eternal blindness Elymas the sorcerer, when resisting the ways of the Lord. Devotion towards God is no cruelty. Wherefore also it is said in the Law, "If thy brother, or friend, or the wife of thy bosom entice thee secretly from the truth, thy hand shall be upon them, and thou shalt pour out their blood, and shalt take away the evil from the midst of Israel."

Deut. xiii. 6, 8.

Once more I shall say, are the relics of the Martyrs unclean? And what did the Apostles endure that they might go before the unclean body of Stephen with so much regard, and make for him so great lamentation, that their grief might be changed into our joy? For when you say that he abominates vigils, this he does against his name, that Vigilantius may please to sleep, and not to hear the Saviour saying, "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And in another place the Prophet sings, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee, be-

Matt. xxvi. 40, 41.

Ps. cxix. 62.

Deo pietas. Unde et in lege dicitur: *Si frater tuus et amicus et uxor quæ est in sinu tuo, depravare te voluerit a veritate; sit manus tua super eos, et effundes sanguinem eorum: et auferes malum de medio Israel.*

Deut. xiii. 6, 8.

Iterum dicam: Ergo Martyrum immundæ sunt reliquiæ? Et quid passi sunt Apostoli, ut immundum Stephani corpus tanta funeris ambitione præcederent; et facerent ei planctum magnum, ut eorum luctus in nostrum gaudium verteretur? Nam quod dicis eum vigilias execrari, facit et hoc contra vocabulum suum, ut velit dormire Vigilantius, et non audiat Salvatorem dicentem: *Sic non potuistis una hora vigilare mecum? Vigilate et orate, ut non intretis in tentationem. Spiritus promtus est, sed caro infirma.* Et in alio loco Propheta decantat: *Media nocte surgebam, ut confiterer tibi, super judicia jus-*

Matt. xxvi. 40, et Marc. xiv. 37.

Ps. cxviii. 62.

cause of Thy righteous judgments." We read also in the Gospel that the Lord spent the night in watching; and that the imprisoned Apostles watched the whole night, so that as they sung psalms, the earth quaked, the keeper of the prison believed, the magistrates and the people were astonished. Paul says, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same;" and in another place, "In watchings often." Let Vigilantius sleep therefore, and let him be drowned with the Egyptians by the destroyer of Egypt. Let us say with David, "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep," so that the Holy One may come to us, and *Air*, which is being interpreted, *The Watchman*. But if, on account of our sins, He be asleep, let us say to Him, "Arise, why sleepest Thou, Lord?" and cause Him to arise; and when the boat is tossed, let us call out, "Master, save us, we perish."

A.D. 404.

Col. iv. 2.

2 Cor. xi. 27.

Ps. cxxi. 4.

Dan. iv. 10.

Matt. viii. 25.

'4. I could have wished to say more, did not the brevity of a letter impose on me the obligation to silence, and had you thought it expedient

*titiæ tuæ.* Dominum quoque in Evangelio legimus pernoctasse, et Apostolos clausos carcere tota nocte vigilasse, ut illis psallentibus terra quateretur, custos carceris crederet, magistratus et civitas terrerentur. Loquitur Paulus: *Orationi insistite, vigilantes in ea.* Et in alio loco: *In vigiliis frequenter.* Dormiat itaque Vigilantius, et ab exterminatore Ægypti cum Ægyptiis dormiens suffocetur. Nos dicamus cum David: *Non dormitabit neque dormiet, qui custodit Israel*, ut veniat ad nos sanctus, et AIR, qui interpretatur *vigil.* Et si quando propter peccata nostra dormierit, dicamus ad eum: *Exurge, quid dormitas, Domine?* excitemusque illum, et navicula fluctuante clamemus: *Magister, salvos nos fac, perimus.*

Col. iv. 2. 2 Cor. xi. 27. Ps. cxx. 4. Matt. viii. 25.

Plura dictare volueram, si non Epistolaris brevitas pudorem nobis

A. D. 404. to send me his doggrel books, that I might know what I ought to answer. But at present I am beating the air; and give proof rather of my own orthodoxy than of his heterodoxy, which is manifest to all men. But if you wish that I should write a longer book against him, send the man's dirges and drivellings, that he may hear Matt. iii. 10. John the Baptist announcing, "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the tree: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." '

Examination of Jerome's letter to Riparius.

In the first paragraph of this letter we have nothing but scurrility mixed up with a very poor defence of the observances, to which Vigilantius objected. But there is an admission which has sadly perplexed the advocates of saint-worship.

See supra, p. 376.

"*We do not worship nor adore the Angels, nor the Archangels, nor the Cherubim, nor the Seraphim, nor any name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; lest we serve the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. But we honour the relics of the Martyrs, that we may adore Him Whose Martyrs they are.*

tacendi imponeret: et si tu librorum ipsius ad nos voluisses mittere cantilenas, ut scire possemus ad quæ rescribere deberemus. Nunc autem aërem verberavimus, et non tam illius infidelitatem, quæ omnibus patet, quam nostram fidem aperuimus. Cæterum si volueris longiorem nos adversum eum librum scribere, mitte nænias illius et ineptias, ut Ibid. iii. 10. Johannem Baptistam audiat prædicantem: *Jam securis ad radices arborum posita est. Omnis arbor, quæ non facit fructum, excidetur, et in ignem mittetur.*—Hieron. Opera, 4. pars ii. p. 278—280. Benedictine Edition. Paris, 1706.

*We honour the servants, that the honour of the servants may redound to the Lord.*" A. D. 404.

Here Jerome expressly repudiates the thought of adoring, that is, of praying to, beatified spirits, be they angels or martyrs. But Paulinus, as I have shown (pages 79, 83, 87), did pray to a deceased martyr, to St. Felix; and the Roman church has since decided in council that the saints are to be invoked in prayer. This will be discussed more at length hereafter: in the meantime I may observe that Vigilantius was reviled in the most violent language for pointing out an abuse, which was sure to lead to saint-worship.

In the second paragraph Jerome betrays a curious secret, "*I am surprised that the holy bishop, in whose diocese he is said to be a presbyter, should acquiesce in his madness, and should not with his apostolic rod of iron dash in pieces the useless vessel.*" p. 377.

So the diocesan of Vigilantius not only did not silence him, but *acquiesced* with him! Presently we shall see that other bishops were his associates and abettors. But if his bishop did not suspend him for his erroneous opinions, why did not the prelate punish him for those unclean and drunken habits of which Jerome accused him? Why was the impure and profligate clergyman permitted to mix among saints, and to be mistaken for one? The imputation of profligacy falls to the ground.

But what was the diocese, and who was the bishop to whom Jerome alluded?

A. D. 404.

The next time Jerome made mention of the proceedings of Vigilantius, he spoke more plainly of the locality where he was dwelling, viz., the foot of the Pyrenees;* and he spoke also of two presbyters, Riparius and Desiderius, whose parishes were in the neighbourhood of Vigilantius.† Baronius, Pagi, Vaissette, and Fleury, incline to the opinion that Exuperius, Bishop of Thoulouse, was the Prelate, in whose diocese Vigilantius was officially employed when he began to write against the relics of the martyrs.

Exuperius.

The letter of Pope Innocent to Exuperius, in the year 405, in which he answered several questions put to him on points of discipline, constitutes a connecting link, according to Baronius,‡ between Vigilantius and Exuperius. The celibacy of the clergy was one of the points contested by Vigilantius, and submitted by the bishop of Thoulouse to the consideration of the Roman pontiff, who expressed himself to this effect, 'The married priests and deacons who still live with their wives should be deposed from their offices, unless they consent to live in continence for the future.' § Innocent referred to a decretal of Pope Siricius, issued twenty years before, and speaks of those who might yet be *in ignorance* of the ordinance against married clergy. Thus it is that incidental passages, in the writings

* 'Ad radices Pyrenæi.'—Hier. Op. 4, ii. p. 284.

† 'Qui parœcias suas vicinia istius scribunt esse maculatas.'—Ibid. p. 281.

‡ Bar. sub. an. 405, § 62, and 406, § 47.

§ See Fleury on this subject, lib. xxi. c. 4.

and decretals of the fourth and fifth centuries, let out the fact, that the yoke of celibacy was a recent imposition of episcopal authority, and not an enactment of the primitive church. If it could be satisfactorily shown that Exuperius was the bishop who acquiesced at first in the proceedings of Vigilantius, what an attestation it would be in his favour! Exuperius stood high in the estimation of all men. Jerome was full of his praises, and attributed it to his virtues that the downfal of Thoulouse was retarded.* A.D. 404.

At the end of the second paragraph we find that turgid sentence, on the strength of which some writers have supposed that Vigilantius took up his abode at one time in or near the Cottian Alps. "*I once saw this monster, and wished to bind the madman with Scripture testimonies; as with the chains of Hippocrates; but he went off, he departed, he escaped, he burst forth, and between the billows of the Adriatic and the Cottian Alps, he has railingly complained against us; for whatever the madman talks is to be styled bawling and clamour.*"

This passage clearly relates to an event which had taken place at some previous time, and not to what was going on when Jerome was writing his letter to Riparius (see page 322). I doubt whether it justifies the Benedictine authors of the 'Histoire littéraire de la France,' in saying that Vigilantius 'sometimes dwelt between the Adriatic Sea and the Cottian Alps,' much less in

* Hier. Op. 4, pars ii. pp. 748, 777.

A. D. 404. speaking of 'Riparius' as 'the priest in the neighbourhood of Vigilantius, who then lived in the Cottian Alps.'*

The two last paragraphs are in the same style with the two first, and inform us that this petulant epistle was penned in a great hurry by Jerome, before he had seen the Treatise of Vigilantius;—that he would wait to see that production, and would then, if necessary, take further notice of it.

* See Hist. Lit. de la France, article 'Vigilantius,' vol. ii. pp. 57 and 60. In a subsequent article, Riparius is stated to have been the priest of a parish in the diocese of Cominge, in Aquitain. Ibid. article 'Ripaire,' p. 85.

## CHAP. XVIII.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

:ROME, at the end of his letter to Riparius, en- A. D. 404-6.
ıged to write more at length against Vigilantius, he would send him the book composed by our 'esbyter. The book itself is no longer in exis- nce, and we have no other means of judging of ı contents, and of the effects produced by it, an by considering the few specimens of the yle and matter preserved in the pages of Jerome, ıd weighing its importance by the sensation it ıused.

Riparius and Desiderius, two priests, who were ficiating in parishes adjoining to that in which igilantius was residing, drew up an account of hat was going on, and represented that the hole vicinity was in commotion;—that their own :ople were infected by the mischievous doctrines ' the Reformer;—and that there were many who ɔt only favoured him, but agreed with him in hat they called his blasphemous declamations ;ainst the observances of the Church. With ıis formal complaint against their brother clergy-

Riparius and Desiderius complain against Vigilantius.

A. D. 404-6. man, they despatched copies of his writings by the hands of Sisinnius, and earnestly entreated Jerome to put a stop to the mischief by an immediate reply to the arguments used by the offender. The monk complied with their request, and in one night drew up the treatise, which was to "crush the serpent." This was in the year 406, and the document which I now present to the reader, is the only historical fragment, which throws light on the great effort of Vigilantius to restore the Church of the fourth century to the purity and simplicity of the primitive worship.

The translation is by Mr. Stevenson, to whom I am indebted for rendering the other invectives of Jerome, against the Gallic protester, into English. My reason for adopting the translations of this accomplished scholar, rather than my own, is, that there might not be a shadow of suspicion, as to their taking the colour of prejudice or of forced construction. Mr. Stevenson has used the latest edition of Jerome's works, that published by Dominic Villars, at Verona, in 1734-5. The Latin text, under the English, in this and in all cases when I have cited the original, is from the Benedictine edition, printed at Paris in 1706; the edition which Pagi, the authors of 'Histoire Littéraire de la France,' and the Oxford translators of Fleury (1842-1843) used, when they quoted Jerome. In the margin of the Latin text, of each of the three attacks upon Vigilantius, I have inserted the various readings which occur in the edition of Verona, and in an ancient MS. copy of Jerome pre-

served in the valuable manuscript library of the dean and chapter of Durham. The collation may prove useful, though the various readings are not very important. A.D. 406.

## *The Book of St. Jerome the Presbyter against Vigilantius.† A.D. 406.

[Written in the year 406.]

'1. Many sorts of monsters have been born in the world. We read in Isaiah of centaurs and satyrs, owls and dragons. Job in mystic language describes the leviathan and the behemoth. The fables of the poets tell of Cerberus and the Stymphalidæ, of the Erymanthian boar and the Nemean lion, of the chimera and the many-headed hydra. Virgil describes Cacus. Spain gave birth to the three-formed Geryon. Gaul alone has had no monsters, but has always abounded in the bravest and most eloquent of men. Suddenly arose Vigilantius, or, as he may be more truly called, Dormitantius, who in his unclean spirit fights against the Spirit of Christ, and denies that the sepulchres

Isa. xiii. 21, & xxxv. 7. Job iii. 8, & xl. 15.

Jerome reviles Vigilantius.

* The observations on this Book are reserved for the next chapter.

†HIERONYMUS ADVERSUS VIGILANTIUM.

Multa in orbe monstra generata sunt. Centauros et Sirenas, ululas et onocrotalos in Isaia legimus. Job Leviathan et Behemoth mystico sermone describit. Cerberum et Stymphalidas, aprumque Erimanthium et leonem Nemæum, chimæram atque hydram multorum capitum narrant fabulæ poetarum. Cacum describit Virgilius. Triformem Geryonem Hispaniæ prodiderunt. Sola Gallia monstra non habuit, sed viris semper fortibus et eloquentissimis abundavit. Exortus est subito Vigilantius, seu verius Dormitantius, qui immundo spiritu pugnet contra Christi Spiritum, et Martyrum neget sepulcra veneranda:

Hoc opusculum dicimus Scriptum, anno Christi 406, vel circiter.

Isa. xiii. et xxxv. Job iii. xl. Æneid. l. 8.

Gallia viris fortissimis et eloquentissimis abundavit semper.

A. D. 406. of the martyrs are to be venerated; who asserts that vigils are to be condemned; that Halleluiah is never to be sung except in Easter; that continence is heresy; that chastity is the forcing-bed of lust. And as Euphorbus is said to have been born again in the person of Pythagoras, so has there been a resurrection of the depraved soul of Jovinian in Vigilantius, so that we are compelled to answer the wiles of the devil in the one as well as in the other. To whom it may justly be said, Isa. xiv. 21. "Oh accursed offspring, prepare thy sons for the death, on account of the sins of thy father." The former, being condemned by the authority of the church of Rome, belched out rather than breathed out his spirit in the midst of pheasants and the flesh of swine. This latter fellow, an inn-keeper of Calagurris, and in perversion called the dumb Quinctilian, from the name of the village, adulterates the pure wine with water, and, employing the old-fashioned artifice, attempts to unite the poison of his heresy with the Catholic faith; to attack virginity, to hate chastity, and in the midst of the revels of the laity to exclaim against the

Isa. i. 22, cf. 2 Cor. ii. 17.

Errores Vigilantii et blasphemiæ, in eo Jovinianus surrexit. Isa. xiv. sec. lxx.

damnandas dicit esse vigilias; numquam nisi in Pascha Alleluia cantandum; continentiam, hæresim; pudicitiam libidinis seminarium. Et quomodo Euphorbus in Pythagora renatus esse perhibetur, sic in isto Joviniani mens prava surrexit: ut et in illo, et in hoc diaboli respondere cogamur insidiis. Cui jure dicitur: *Semen pessimum, para filios tuos occisioni peccatis patris tui.* Ille Romanæ Ecclesiæ auctoritate damnatus,* inter phasides aves et carnes suillas non tam emisit spiritum quam eructavit. Iste caupo Calagurritanus et in perversum propter nomen viculi mutus Quintilianus, miscet aquam vino: et de artificio pristino, suæ venena perfidiæ Catholicæ fidei sociare conatur, impugnare virginitatem, odisse pudicitiam, in convivio sæcularium

* Vide Gennadium in Catalogo. Quintilianus, unde fuit?

fasts of the saints. Whilst he philosophises in his cups, and feeds upon dainties, he is charmed with the melody of psalms, so that he condescends to hear the songs of David, and Idithun, and Asaph, and the sons of Chore, only in the midst of feasting. Unable any longer to restrain myself, and to turn a deaf ear to the wrong done to the apostles and martyrs, I have spoken as I have done, not in ridicule, but in sorrow. A. D. 406.

'2. What wickedness! He is said to have bishops associated with him in his crime, if indeed those persons are to be styled bishops who ordain no deacons except such as are already wedded, who give credit for chastity to no unmarried person, nay rather who demonstrate how saintly is the life of those who suspect evil of every one; and who confer not the sacraments unless they see that the wives of [their] clergy are pregnant, and that children are crying at their mothers' bosoms. What are the Eastern churches to do? what the churches of Egypt? what the church of the apos- Vigilantius encouraged by bishops.

contra sanctorum jejunia proclamare; dum inter phialas philosophatur, et ad placentas liguriens, Psalmorum modulatione mulcetur: ut tantum inter epulas, David et Idithun, et Asaph et filiorum Chore cantica audire dignetur. Hæc dolentis magis effudi animo quam ridentis, dum me cohibere non possum; et injuriam Apostolorum ac Martyrum surda nequeo aure transire.

Proh nefas, episcopos sui sceleris dicitur habere consortes, si tamen episcopi nominandi sunt, qui non ordinant diaconos, nisi prius uxores duxerint: nulli cœlibi credentes pudicitiam, imo ostendentes quam sancte vivant, qui male de omnibus suspicantur; et nisi prægnantes uxores viderint clericorum, infantesque de ulnis matrum vagientes, Christi sacramenta non tribuunt. Quid facient Orientis Ecclesiæ? quid Ægypti, et sedis Apostolicæ, quæ aut virgines clericos * accipiunt,

* MS. *accipit Cœlibatus Clericorum.*

A. D. 406.

tolic see? for they accept as clerks such [only] as are virgins, or are continent, or such as cease to be husbands although they have wives. This is the doctrine of Dormitantius, giving the reins to lust, and by his exhortations redoubling the natural warmth of the flesh, which for the most part burns fiercely during youth; or rather extinguishing it by intercourse with women; so that we differ in no respect from swine, from brute beasts, from horses, of which it is written, "They were as fed horses in the morning; every one neighed after his neighbour's wife." In regard to this the Holy Spirit speaketh by David, "Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding;" and again, with reference to Dormitantius, "Whose mouth must be held with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."

Jer. v. 8.

Ps. xxxii. 9.

'3. But it is now time for us to quote his sayings, that we may answer them separately. For it might happen that the ill-natured interpreter* should once more affirm that the affair had been invented by me for the purpose of giving it a de-

* Rufinus, see Præfat. in Op. Hier. tom. i. Ep. cxvii. editio Val. Verona.

aut continentes; aut si uxores habuerint, mariti esse desistunt? Hoc docuit Dormitantius, libidini frena permittens et naturalem carnis ardorem, qui in adolescentia plerumque fervescit, suis hortatibus duplicans, imo extinguens coïtu feminarum: ut nihil sit quo distemus a porcis, quo differamus a brutis animantibus, quo ab equis, de quibus scriptum est: *Equi insanientes in feminas facti sunt mihi: unusquisque in uxorem proximi sui hinnebat.* Hoc est quod loquitur per David Spiritus Sanctus: *Nolite fieri sicut equus et mulus, quibus non est intellectus.* Et rursum de Dormitantio et sociis ejus: *In chamo et freno maxillas eorum constringe, qui non approximant ad te.*

Jer. v. 8.

Ps. xxxi. 9.

Sed jam tempus est ut ipsius verba ponentes ad singula respondere nitamur. Fieri enim potest, ut rursum malignus interpres dicat fictam

clamatory and rhetorical answer, as I did when I wrote to the mother and daughter in Gaul, who disagreed with each other. This little dissertation of mine originates in the suggestion of the holy presbyters Riparius and Desiderius, who write to me that their parishes are contaminated by the vicinity of this person, and who, by brother Sisinnius have sent me the books which this snorer has disgorged in the midst of his surfeit. They also assert that some persons have been found, who to indulge their own vices, acquiesce in his blasphemies. Although he is unskilled in speaking, and devoid of information, and so unpolished in elocution, that he cannot defend even the truth itself; yet for the sake of the laity and of "silly women laden with sins, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," I shall reply to his rhapsodies in one short essay, lest I should appear to have neglected the letters of these holy men who have requested me so to do.

A. D. 406.

Jerome accuses Vigilantius of ignorance.

2 Tim. iii. 6.

'4. Verily it is quite in keeping with his pedi-

a me materiam, cui rhetorica declamatione respondeam: sicut illam quam scripsi ad Gallias, matris et filiæ inter se discordantium. Auctores sunt hujus dictatiunculæ meæ sancti presbyteri Riparius et Desiderius, qui parœcias suas vicinia istius scribunt esse maculatas, miseruntque libros per fratrem Sisinnium, quos inter crapulam stertens evomuit. Et asserunt repertos esse nonnullos, qui faventes vitiis suis, illius blasphemiis acquiescant. Est quidem imperitus, et verbis et scientia, et sermone inconditus; ne vera quidem potest defendere: sed propter homines sæculi et mulierculas oneratas peccatis, semper discentes et numquam ad scientiam veritatis pervenientes, una lucubratiuncula illius næniis respondebo, ne sanctorum virorum, qui ut hæc facerem me deprecati sunt, videar litteras respuisse.

Epist. alias 47. Riparius, Desiderius et Sisinnius.

Imperitia Vigilantii.

Nimirum respondet generi suo, ut qui de latronum et convenarum

Strab. lib. 4.

A. D. 406.

The birth-place and parentage of Vigilantius.

gree, that he, who is the offspring of a rabble rout of robbers (whom Gn. Pompey, after having subdued Spain, and when hurrying home for his triumph, dropped from the tops of the Pyrenees, and collected into one town, hence called the town of the Convenæ), should so far pillage the church of God; and that the descendant of the Vectones, the Arrebaci, and the Celtiberians, should invade the churches of Gaul, and instead of the standard of the cross, should carry the banner of the devil. Pompey, after he had overcome the Cilician and Isaurian pirates and robbers, did the same thing, in the parts of the East also, that he might found a city between Cilicia and Isauria, which should bear his own name. But at the present time this city preserves the decrees of its elders, and has given birth to no Dormitantius. Gaul cherishes a home-born enemy, and sees a madman, one who should be bound with the chains of Hippocrates, sitting in the church, and, amongst other blasphemous assertions, giving utterance to such as these: "*What need is*

* *Consul*, MS. D.
* *om.* in MS. D.
Convenarum urbs, et patria Vigilantii.

natus est semine; quos Gn.* Pompeius edomita Hispania, et ad triumphum redire festinans, de Pyrenaei jugis deposuit, et in unum oppidum* congregavit; unde et Convenarum urbs nomen accepit; hucusque latrocinetur contra Ecclesiam Dei; et de Vectonibus, Arrebacis, Celtiberisque descendens, incurset Galliarum Ecclesias, portetque nequaquam vexillum Crucis, sed insigne diaboli. Fecit hoc idem Pompeius, etiam in orientis partibus, ut Cilicibus, et Isauris piratis, latronibusque superatis, sui nominis inter Ciliciam et Isauriam conderet civitatem Sed hæc urbs* hodie servat scita majorum, et nullus in ea ortus est Dormitantius.

* *usque hodie*, MS. D.

Verba Vigilantii.

Galliæ vernaculum hostem sustinent, et hominem moti capitis, atque Hippocratis vinculis alligandum, sedentem cernunt in Ecclesia: et inter cætera verba blasphemiæ, ista quoque dicentem; "Quid necesse

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*ere for you, with so much respect, not only to nour but even to adore that—I know not what call it—which you worship as you carry it in little vessel?"* And he again says, in the same ook, "*Why do you, in your adoration, kiss dust lded up in a linen cloth?*" And afterwards, *Under the pretext of religion we see a custom introuced into the churches, which approximates to the ites of the Gentiles, namely, the lighting of multitudes f tapers while the sun is yet shining. And everyhere men kiss in their adoration a small quantity of ust, folded up in a little cloth, and deposited in a ittle vessel. Men of this stamp give great honour, orsooth, to the most blessed martyrs, thinking with a ew insignificant wax-tapers to glorify those whom he Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, enlightens ith all the brightness of his majesty.*

The words of Vigilantius in condemnation of relic-worship.

'5. But, madman that you are, who ever dored the martyrs? who ever regarded man as God? When the Lycaonians imagined Paul and Barnabas to be Jupiter and Mercury, and wished

Jerome repudiates the adoration of martyrs. Acts xiv. 12.

st, te tanto honore, non solum honorare, sed etiam adorare illud escio quid, quod in modico vasculo transferendo colis?" Et rursum eodem libro: "Quid pulverem linteamine circumdatum, adorando scularis?" Et in consequentibus: "Prope ritum gentilium videmus sub rætextu religionis introductum in Ecclesiis, sole adhuc fulgente, moles ereorum accendi, et ubiquumque pulvisculum nescio quod, in modico asculo, precioso linteamine circumdatum, osculantes adorant. Magum honorem præbent hujusmodi homines beatissimis Martyribus, uos putant de vilissimis cereolis illustrandos; quos Agnus, Qui est in iedio throni cum omni fulgore majestatis suæ illustrat."

Quis enim, O insanum caput, aliquando Martyres adoravit? quis ominem putavit Deum? nonne Paulus et Barnabas quum a Lycaoibus Jupiter et Mercurius putarentur, et eis vellent hostias immolare, Act. xiv.

A. D. 406. to offer sacrifices to them, did not they rend their garments, and declare that they were men? Not but that they were better than Jupiter and Mercury, men long since dead; but because the honour due unto God would have been transferred to them by this error of heathenism. We read Acts x. 26. the same of Peter, who with his hand raised up Cornelius, as he was about to adore him, and said, "Arise, for I also am a man."

'And do you dare to say, "*You worship that, I know not what to call it, as you carry it about in a little vessel?*" I should like to know what you mean by that expression, "*I know not what to call it.*" Speak more openly, that you may give free range to your blasphemy, "*A small quantity of dust which is folded up in a precious cloth, and deposited in a little vessel.*" He is distressed that the relics of the martyrs are folded in a costly covering, and are not huddled up in rags and canvass, or thrown upon the dunghill, that Vigilantius, tipsy and nodding, might alone be adored.

'Are we necessarily sacrilegious when we enter

sciderunt vestimenta sua, et se homines esse dixerunt? Non quod meliores non essent olim mortuis hominibus Jove atque Mercurio: sed quod sub gentilitatis errore, honor eis Deo debitus deferretur. Quod et de Petro legimus, qui Cornelium se adorare cupientem manu sublevavit, et dixit: *Surge: nam et ego homo sum.* Ibid. x. 26.

Et audes dicere, "illud nescio quid quod in modico vasculo transferendo colis?" Quid est illud, nescio quid, scire desidero. Expone manifestius, ut tota libertate blasphemes, pulvisculum nescio quod in modico vasculo precioso linteamine circumdatum. Dolet Martyrum reliquias precioso operiri velamine: et non vel pannis, vel cilicio coligari, vel projici in sterquilinium; ut solus Vigilantius ebrius et dormiens adoretur.

Ergo sacrilegi sumus, quando Apostolorum basilicas ingredimur?

the churches of the apostles? Was the emperor Constantius guilty of sacrilege when he translated to Constantinople the holy relics of Andrew, Luke, and Timothy, before which demons roar out, whose presence is felt and acknowledged by those who have possessed Vigilantius? Is the present emperor Arcadius to be called sacrilegious, who, after a length of time, translated from Judea into Thrace the bones of the blessed Samuel? Are all bishops not only sacrilegious, but also to be accounted fools, who have carried in silk and in a golden vessel this worthless trash and these loose cinders? Are we to consider as fools the people of every church, who have met these holy relics, and with the utmost joy have acknowledged and received the prophet as if he were present and alive; so that from Palestine even to Chalcedon crowds of people were gathered together, and with one voice sang together the praises of Christ? They adored Samuel, forsooth, and not Christ, of whom Samuel was the levite and the prophet. You surmise that he is dead, and therefore you

A. D. 406.

Jerome defends relic-worship.

Sacrilegus fuit Constantius Imperator, qui sanctas reliquias Andreæ, Lucæ, et Timothei transtulit Constantinopolim, apud quas dæmones rugiunt, et inhabitatores Vigilantii illorum se sentire præsentiam confitentur? Sacrilegus dicendus est et nunc Augustus Arcadius, qui ossa beati Samuelis longo post tempore de Judæa transtulit in Thraciam? Omnes episcopi non solum sacrilegi; sed et fatui judicandi, qui rem vilissimam et cineres dissolutos in serico et vase aureo portaverunt? Stulti omnium Ecclesiarum populi, qui occurrerunt sanctis reliquiis; et tanta lætitia, quasi præsentem, viventemque Prophetam cernerent, susceperunt; ut de Palæstina usque Chalcedonem jungerentur populorum examina, et in Christi laudes una voce resonarent? Videlicet adorabant Samuelem, et non Christum, Cujus Samuel et Levita et Prophetes fuit. Mortuum suspicaris, et idcirco blasphemas.

Reliquiæ Apostolorum, et B. Samuelis à quibus et quo translatæ.

Cultus Reliquiarum.

A. D. 406.

blaspheme. Read the gospel, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Therefore if they are alive, they are not confined, according to your theory, *in an honourable prison.*

Matt. xxii. 32.

The place of repose of the apostles and martyrs.

'6. For you say that "*the souls of the apostles and martyrs have settled themselves either in Abraham's bosom, or in a place of refreshment, or under the altar of God; and that they cannot escape from their tombs and present themselves where they please.*" To wit, being of senatorial rank they are not confined among murderers in a foul prison, but are in free and honourable keeping in the Fortunate Isles and in the Elysian Fields. Do you impose laws upon God? Do you put the apostles in bonds, so that they are detained in custody until the day of judgment? Are not they with their Lord, of whom it is written, "They follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth." If the Lamb is everywhere, they who are with the Lamb must therefore be believed to be everywhere. And since the devil and his

Rev. xiv. 4.

Matt. xxii. Lege Evangelium: *Deus Abraham, Deus Isaac, Deus Jacob: non est Deus mortuorum, sed vivorum.* Si ergo vivunt, honesto juxta te carcere non clauduntur.

Vigilantii inepta sententia de custodia Sanctorum.

Ais enim vel in sinu Abrahæ, vel in loco refrigerii, vel subter aram Dei, animas Apostolorum et Martyrum consedisse, nec posse de suis tumulis, et* ubi voluerint adesse præsentes. Senatoriæ videlicet dignitatis sunt; et non inter homicidas teterrimo carcere, sed in libera honestaque custodia in fortunatorum insulis et in campis Elysiis recluduntur. Tu Deo leges pones? Tu Apostolis vincula injicies? ut usque ad diem judicii teneantur custodia, nec sint cum Domino suo, de quibus scriptum est: *Sequuntur Agnum, quoquumque vadit.* Si Agnus ubique, ergo et hi qui cum Agno sunt, ubique esse credendi sunt. Et quum diabolus et dæmones toto vagentur in orbe, et celeritate

* *et*, MS. D.

Apoc. xiv. 4.

Dæmonum discursus.

angels wander over the whole world, and are present everywhere with exceeding rapidity, shall martyrs, who have shed their blood, be cooped up under the altar, and find it impossible to escape from thence? A. D. 406.

'7. You say in your treatise that "*so long as we are alive we can mutually pray for each other; but that after we are dead the prayer of none for another can be heard, especially since the martyrs pray ineffectually to obtain vengeance for the shedding of their blood.*" If the apostles and martyrs whilst yet in the body can pray for others, being as yet solicitous for themselves, how much the rather after having obtained their crowns, their victories, and their triumphs? Moses, one single man, obtained pardon from God for six hundred thousand armed men; and Stephen, the follower of his Lord, and the first martyr to Christ, besought forgiveness for his persecutors; and after they have begun to be with Christ, shall they less prevail? Paul the apostle says that the two hundred and seventy-six souls in the ship were bestowed

Prayers to the dead are ineffectual.

Rev. vi. 10.

Exod. xxxii. 11.

Jerome argues in defence of prayers to the departed.

Acts xi. 60.

Acts xxvii. 24.

nimia ubique præsentes sint, Martyres post effusionem sanguinis sui *arca operientur inclusi, et inde exire non poterunt?

*MS. *ara.*

Dicis in libello tuo, quod dum vivimus, mutuo pro nobis *orare possimus; postquam autem mortui fuerimus, nullius sit pro alio exaudienda oratio: præsertim quum Martyres ultionem sui sanguinis obsecrantes, impetrare non quiverint. Si Apostoli et Martyres adhuc in corpore constituti possunt orare pro cæteris, quando pro se adhuc debent esse soliciti, *quanto magis post coronas, victorias, et triumphos?

* *mutuo orare*, MS. D.

Sententia Hæreticorum hujus temporis.

* *tanto*, MS. D.

Unus homo Moyses, sexcentis millibus armatorum impetrat a Deo veniam: et Stephanus imitator Domini sui, et primus Martyr in Christo, pro persecutoribus veniam deprecatur; et postquam cum Christo esse cœperint, minus valebunt? Paulus Apostolus ducentas septuaginta sex sibi dicit in navi animas condonatas: et postquam

Exod. xxxii.

Act. vii.

Ibid. xxvii.

A. D. 406.

upon him, and after he is freed from the body and begins to be with Christ, shall he then close his mouth, and be unable to utter one whisper for those who through the whole world have believed his gospel? Shall the living dog Vigilantius be better than that dead lion? I should rightly cite this from the Preacher, were I to confess that Paul was dead in the spirit.

Eccl. ix. 4.

'Lastly. The saints are not styled 'Dead,' but 'Asleep.' Wherefore even Lazarus, who was about to rise again, is said to have 'slept,' and the apostle commands the Thessalonians not to sorrow for them who are asleep. You are asleep even while awake, and you write in your sleep, and present me with an apocryphal book, which under the name of Esdras is read by you and such as you, in which it is written that after death none dare pray for another, which book I have never read. Why should I take into my hands that which the church does not receive? unless indeed that you should offer me Balsamus, and Barbelus, and the Thesaurus of the Manichee, and the ridi-

John xi. 11.

1 Thess. iv. 13.

resolutus esse cœperit cum Christo, tunc ora clausurus est: et pro his qui in toto orbe ad suum Evangelium crediderunt mutire non poterit? Meliorque erit Vigilantius canis vivens, quam ille leo mortuus? Recte hoc de Ecclesiaste proponerem, si Paulum in spiritu mortuum confiterer. Denique sancti non appellantur mortui, sed dormientes. Unde et Lazarus qui resurrecturus erat, dormisse perhibetur. Et Apostolus vetat Thessalonicenses de dormientibus contristari.

Eccles. ix.

Johan. xi.

1 Thess. iv.

Tu vigilans dormis, et dormiens scribis: et proponis mihi librum apocryphum, qui sub nomine Esdræ a te, et similibus tui legitur: ubi scriptum est, quod post mortem nullus pro aliis audeat deprecari: quem ego librum nunquam legi. Quid enim necesse est in manus sumere, quod Ecclesia not recipit? Nisi forte Balsamum mihi, et Barbelum, et Thesaurum Manichæi, et ridiculum nomen Leusiboræ

Non sunt legendi libri Apocryphi, ab Ecclesia non recepti.

culous name of Leusibora; and (since you dwell at the roots of the Pyrenees and are close upon Iberia,) you are a follower of the incredible monstrosities of that most ancient heretic Basilides, and his blundering doctrine; and you propound that which is condemned by the authority of the whole world. For in your petty commentary you cite, as if making for you, a passage from Solomon, which Solomon assuredly never penned, in order that you, who have a second Esdras, should also have a second Solomon. Read, if you are so inclined, the pretended revelations of all the patriarchs and prophets; and when you have learned them, chant them in the women's weaving shops, nay rather offer them for perusal in your taverns, that you may by these ballads the more easily induce the unlearned people to drink. A. D. 406.

'8. We do not light candles in daylight, as you falsely accuse us, but we do so that we may alleviate the darkness of the night by this comfort, and that we may watch by the light, lest we, being blind, should sleep with you in darkness. But if

Jerome defends the use of lights, tapers, &c.

proferas, et quia ad radices Pyrenei habitas, vicinusque es Iberiæ, Basilidis antiquissimi hæretici et imperitæ scientiæ, incredibilia portenta prosequeris, et proponis quod totius orbis auctoritate damnatur.

Basilidis portenta verborum.

Nam in Commentariolo tuo quasi pro te faciens de Salomone sumis testimonium, quod Salomon omnino non scripsit: ut qui habes alterum Esdram, habeas et Salomonem alterum: et si tibi placuerit, legito fictas revelationes omnium Patriarcharum et Prophetarum: et quum illas didiceris, inter mulierum textrinas cantato, immo legendas propone in tabernis tuis: ut facilius per has nænias vulgus indoctum provoces ad bibendum.

Libri Apocryphi et fictæ revelationes.

Cereos autem non clara luce accendimus, sicut frustra calumniaris: sed ut noctis tenebras hoc solatio temperemus; et vigilemus ad lumen, ne cæci tecum dormiamus in tenebris. Quod si aliqui per imperitiam,

Cerei in templis quare accensi?

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some do so, in honour of the martyrs, through the ignorance and simplicity of secular men or even of religious women, (of whom we may in truth say, "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge,") what loss do you thereby sustain? The apostles also once found fault because the ointment was wasted, but they were rebuked by the voice of the Lord. For neither did Christ need the ointment, nor do the martyrs require the light of tapers; and yet the woman did so in honour of Christ, and her devotion of heart was accepted. And as many as light tapers have their reward according to their faith, as the apostle says, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Do you call such men as these idolaters? I do not deny that all we who believe in Christ have passed from the error of idolatry. For we are not Christians by birth, but become so by regeneration. And because we formerly worshipped idols, ought we not now to worship God, lest we should appear to honour Him and

Rom. x. 2.

Mark xiv. 4.

Rom. xiv. 5.

et simplicitatem sæculiarium hominum, vel certe religiosarum feminarum, de quibus vere possumus dicere: *Confiteor, zelum Dei habent, sed non secundum scientiam*, hoc pro honore Martyrum faciunt, quid inde perdis? Causabantur quondam et Apostoli, quod periret unguentum; sed Domini voce correpti sunt. Neque enim Christus indigebat unguento, nec Martyres lumine cereorum: et tamen illa mulier in honore Christi hoc fecit, devotioque mentis ejus recipitur. Et quiquumque accendunt cereos, secundum fidem suam habent mercedem, dicente Apostolo: *Unusquisque in suo sensu abundet.* Idololatras appellas hujusmodi homines? Non diffiteor, omnes nos qui in Christo credimus de idololatriæ errore venisse. Non enim nascimur, sed renascimur Christiani. Et quia quondam colebamus idola, nunc Deum colere non debemus, ne simili Eum videamur cum idolis honore

Rom. x. 2.

Matt. xxvi. et Marc xiv.

Rom. xiv. 5.

Christiani renascimur.

idols with one and the same honour? The one was paid to idols, and therefore is to be detested; the other is rendered to martyrs, and is therefore to be sanctioned. For even without the relics of the martyrs, throughout the whole of the eastern churches, when the gospel is to be read the lamps are lighted, even during sunshine; a proof that this is done not to drive away the darkness, but in token of joyfulness. Wherefore the virgins in the gospel have their lamps always burning. And to the apostles it is said, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning in your hands;" and concerning John the Baptist, "He was a burning and a shining light;" that under the figure of bodily light that light might be exhibited of which we read in the Psalter, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path, O Lord."

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Luke xii. 35.

John v. 35.

Ps. cxix. 105.

'9. Does the bishop of Rome therefore act amiss when he offers to the Lord sacrifices above the bones of those deceased men, Peter and Paul, which we consider worthy of veneration, but

Religious services at the graves of the martyrs.

venerari? Illud fiebat idolis, et idcirco detestandum est: hoc fit Martyribus, et idcirco recipiendum est. Nam et absque Martyrum reliquiis per totas Orientis Ecclesias, quando legendum est Evangelium, accenduntur luminaria, jam sole rutilante: non utique ad fugandas tenebras; sed ad signum lætitiæ demonstrandum. Unde et virgines illæ Evangelicæ semper habent accensas lampades suas. Et ad Apostolos dicitur: *Sint lumbi vestri præcincti, et lucernæ ardentes in manibus vestris.* Et de Johanne Baptista: *Ille erat lucerna ardens et lucens:* ut sub typo luminis corporalis illa lux ostendatur, de qua in Psalterio legimus: *Lucerna pedibus meis verbum Tuum, Domine, et lumen semitis meis.*

Luminaria ad Evangelium accenduntur, quare?

Matt. xxv.

Luc. xii. 35.

Johan. v. 35.

Ps. cxviii. 105.

Male facit ergo Romanus Episcopus, qui super mortuorum hominum Petri et Pauli, secundum nos ossa veneranda, secundum te vilem pul-

Romanus Episcopus.

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you vile dust, and when he regards their tombs as the altars of Christ? And does not only the bishop of a single city err, but the bishops of the whole world, when, disregarding Vigilantius the tavern-keeper, they enter the churches of the dead, in which are deposited *some most worthless dust and ashes, I know not what, wrapped up in linen;* that these may pollute all things with their own pollution, and the churches be like the sepulchres of the pharisees, whitened without, while within, in your opinion, all things smell of and are filthy with unclean cinders? And after these things, vomiting up from the depths of his bosom unclean nastiness, he ventures to say, "*Do the souls of the martyrs, then, love their ashes, and hover round them, and are always present, lest if any suppliant should perchance happen to draw near, they could not hear him in consequence of their absence?*" A monster this, who deserves to be transported to the world's end! Do you laugh at the relics of the martyrs, and do you with Eunomius, the originator of this heresy, invent a calumny against the churches of

Matt. xxiii.

super corpora Apostolorum offert sacrificia.

visculum, offert Domino sacrificia, et tumulos eorum Christi arbitratur altaria. Et non solum unius urbis, sed totius orbis errant Episcopi, qui cauponem Vigilantium contemnentes, ingrediuntur basilicas mortuorum, in quibus pulvis vilissimus et favilla, nescio quæ, jacet linteamine convoluta; ut polluta omnia polluat; et quasi sepulcra pharisaica foris dealbata sint, quum *intus immundo cinere, juxta te, immunda omnia oleant atque sordeant. Et post hæc de barathro pectoris sui cœnosam spurcitiam evomens, audet dicere: Ergo cineres suos amant animæ Martyrum, et circumvolant eos, semperque præsentes sunt; ne forte si aliquis * precator advenerit, absentes audire non possint? O portentum in terras ultimas deportandum. Rides de reliquiis Martyrum, et cum auctore hujus hæreseos Eunomio, Ecclesiis Christi

Matt. xxiii.

* *inter nos*, MS.D.

Vigilantii stulta sententia vel objectio.

*Al. *precator*, et MS.D.

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Christ, and are not you afraid of the company you are keeping, when you say the same things against us which he utters against the Church? For none of his followers enter the churches of the apostles and martyrs, to wit, that they may adore the defunct Eunomius, whose books they consider of greater authority than the gospels, and in whom they believe to be the light of truth, just as other heresies affirmed that the Comforter had come in the person of Montanus, and say that the Manichean himself is the Paraclete. Tertullian, a most learned man, wrote a celebrated book against your heresy, which formerly broke out against the Church, (that you boast not even of this, as if you had invented a new crime,) and called it by the very appropriate name of Scorpiace; for this, formerly called the Cainian heresy, was diffusing its poison with a circular wound into the body of the Church, and after having for a long time slept as if buried, is now resuscitated by Dormitantius. I wonder you do not tell us that on no

calumniam struis: nec tali societate terreris, ut eadem contra nos loquaris, quæ ille contra Ecclesiam loquitur? Omnes enim sectatores ejus basilicas Apostolorum et Martyrum non ingrediuntur, ut scilicet mortuum adorent Eunomium, cujus libros majoris auctoritatis arbitrantur, quam Evangelia; et in ipso credunt esse lumen veritatis: sicut aliæ hæreses Paracletum in Montanum venisse contendunt, et Manichæum ipsum dicunt esse Paracletum. Scribit adversum hæresim tuam, quæ olim erupit adversum Ecclesiam, (ne et in hoc quasi repertor novi sceleris glorieris,) Tertullianus vir eruditissimus* insigne volumen, quod Scorpiacum vocat† rectissimo nomine: quia arcuato vulnere in Ecclesiæ corpus venena diffundit, quæ olim appellabatur Caïna‡ hæresis: et multo tempore dormiens vel sepulta, nunc a Dormitantio suscitata est. Miror, quod non dicas, nequaquam perpetranda martyria; Deum

Eunomius auctor hæreseos contra Reliquias. Montanus.
* *eloquentissimus*, MS. D. Tertullian. Scorpiacus liber.
† *eum vocans*, MS. D. Caïna hæresis instaurata.
‡ *Cainina*, MS. D.

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account are martyrdoms to be perpetrated; since God, Who requires not the blood of goats and of bulls, still less requires that of men. You who have said this,—for you will be considered as having said it, yea, even though you have said it not: for you, who assert that the relics of martyrs are to be trampled on, forbid blood to be spilt, which is worthy of no honour.

Vigils and night-watchings.

'10. Concerning the frequent celebration of vigils and night-watchings in the churches of the martyrs I have briefly answered in another epistle, which I wrote nearly two years since to the holy presbyter Riparius. But should you think that they are to be rejected, lest we should appear frequently to celebrate Easter, and after the interval of a year to practise no solemn vigils; by parity of reasoning sacrifices are not to be offered to Christ on the Lord's day, lest we should frequently celebrate the Easter of the Lord's resurrection, and begin to have not one Easter, but many. The error and the guilt of some young men

enim Qui sanguinem hircorum taurorumque non quærat, multo magis hominum non requirere. Quod quum dixeris; immo et si non dixeris, ita habeberis quasi dixeris. Qui enim Reliquias Martyrum asseris esse calcandas, prohibes sanguinem fundi, qui nullo honore dignus est.

Vigilias et pernoctationes in basilicis Martyrum sæpe celebrandis, in altera Epistola, quam ante hoc ferme biennium sancto Ripario Presbytero scripseram, respondi breviter. Quod si ideo eas æstimas respuendas, ne sæpe videamur Pascha celebrare, et non solemnes post annum exercere vigilias: ergo et die Dominico non sunt Christo offerenda sacrificia, ne resurrectionis Domini crebro Pascha celebremus, et incipiamus non unum Pascha habere, sed plurima. Error autem et culpa juvenum vilissimarumque mulierum, qui per noctem sæpe deprehenditur, non est religiosis hominibus imputandus: quia et in vigiliis Paschæ tale quid fieri plerumque convincitur, et tamen

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and very worthless women, which is often detected in the night, is not to be imputed to religious men, because even in the vigils of Easter something of the same kind is frequently discovered, and yet the fault of a few does not prejudice religion; for these persons, even were there no vigils, may go astray either in their own houses, or in those of other people. The treachery of Judas did not disparage the faith of the apostles; and the improper vigils of others do not invalidate our's; nay rather, let them who sleep to lust be compelled to watch to chastity. For if a thing be good when once done, it cannot be wrong to do it oftener; or if any crime be to be avoided, it is blameworthy not because it is done often, but because it is done once. We may not hold vigils therefore on the days of Easter lest the long-delayed wishes of adulterers be fulfilled; lest the wife find an opportunity for sinning; lest it be difficult for the husband to lock her up. Whatever is the more rare, is the more ardently desired.

'11. I cannot run through all that the letters of the holy presbyters contain; I shall quote a

paucorum culpa non præjudicat religioni; qui et absque vigiliis possunt errare vel in suis, vel in alienis domibus. Apostolorum fidem Judæ proditio non destruxit. Et nostras ergo vigilias, malæ aliorum vigiliæ non destruent: quin potius pudicitiæ vigilare cogantur, qui libidini dormiunt. Quod enim semel fecisse bonum est, non potest malum esse, si frequentius fiat: aut si aliqua culpa vitanda est, non ex eo quod sæpe, sed ex eo quod fit aliquando culpabile est. Non vigilemus itaque diebus Paschæ, ne exspectata diu adulterorum desideria compleantur, ne occasionem peccandi uxor inveniat, ne maritali non possit recludi clave. Ardentius appetitur, quidquid est rarius.

Quod semel fecisse bonum est, non potest esse malum si frequenter fiat.

Nota verbum, recludi clave.

Non possum universa percurrere, quæ sanctorum Presbyterorum

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Miracles in the churches of the apostles.

few things from the books of this person. He argues against the signs and miracles which are done in the churches of the martyrs, and says that *they are profitable for the misbelievers, and not for the faithful*, as if the question now were, for whom they were performed, and not by what power. Let it be admitted that they are signs for the unbelievers, that they may be led to the faith by miracles, because they will not believe preaching and teaching, and that the Lord did work miracles for the unbelievers; and yet the miracles of the Lord are not on this account to be derided, because these persons were infidels; but they are the more marvellous since they were so efficacious as to tame even the most stubborn minds, and compel them to believe. I do not chose therefore that you should tell me that *miracles are for infidels;* but answer me this; how is there such efficacy of signs and miracles in this most worthless dust and ashes not worth the knowing about? I perceive, I perceive, O most unhappy mortal, what it is that grieves you, what frightens you.

Vigilantii argumenta contra Miracula.

litteræ comprehendunt: de libellis illius aliqua proferam. Argumentatur contra signa atque virtutes, quæ in basilicis Martyrum fiunt, et dicit eas incredulis prodesse, non credentibus: quasi nunc hoc quæratur quibus fiant, et non qua virtute fiant. Esto signa sint infidelium, qui quoniam sermoni et doctrinæ credere noluerunt, signis adducantur ad fidem; et Dominus incredulis signa faciebat, et tamen non idcirco Domini suggillanda sunt signa, quia illi infideles erant: sed majori admirationi erant, quia tantæ fuere potentiæ, ut etiam

Miracula fiebant in basilicis Martyrum.

mentes durissimas edomarent, et ad fidem cogerent. Itaque nolo mihi dicas, signa infidelium sunt: sed responde, quomodo in vilissimo pulvere, et favilla, nescio qua, tanta sit signorum virtutumque præsentia? Sentio, sentio infelicissime mortalium, quid doleas, quid

That unclean spirit who compels you to write these things has often been racked by this most trashy dust, yea is even now racked; and he who conceals his stripes in you, confesses them in others. Unless perhaps, after the fashion of the gentiles and the impious Porphyry and Eunomius, you pretend that these are the tricks of devils, and that the demons do not in reality cry out, but pretend that they are tormented. I give you my advice, enter the churches of the martyrs, and at last you will be purified. There you will find many of your companions; and you will be burnt, not with the tapers of the martyrs, which are displeasing to you, but with invisible flames; and then you will confess what now you deny; and you, who now speak in Vigilantius, will boldly proclaim that you are either Mercury from your love of money; or Nocturnus, (according to the Amphytrion of Plautus,) during whose sleep Jupiter joined himself for two nights with Alcmena in adultery, that Hercules a hero of mighty strength

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timeas. Spiritus iste immundus qui hæc te cogit scribere, sæpe hoc vilissimo tortus est pulvere; immo hodieque torquetur, et qui in te plagas dissimulat, in cæteris confitetur. Nisi forte in morem gentilium impiorumque Porphyrii et Eunomii has præstigias dæmonum esse confingas, et non vere clamare dæmones; sed sua simulare tormenta. Do consilium, ingredere basilicas Martyrum, et aliquando purgaberis: invenies ibi multos socios tuos, et nequaquam cereis Martyrum, qui tibi displicent, sed flammis invisibilibus combureris: et tunc fateberis, quod nunc negas: et tuum nomen, qui in Vigilantio loqueris, liberè proclamabis, te esse aut Mercurium propter nummorum cupiditatem; aut Nocturnum*, juxta Plauti Amphitryonem, quo dormiente, in Alcmenæ adulterio, duas noctes Jupiter copulavit, ut magnæ fortitudinis Hercules nasceretur; aut certe Liberum patrem pro ebrietate et

Dæmones torquebantur in eis.

*MSS. *Nocturninum.*

A. D. [illegible]

might be born; or at the least that you are Bacchus from your drunkenness, and your cup hanging from your shoulders, and your ever-rubicund face, and your frothy lips, and your unbridled railing.

Vigilantius terrified by an earthquake.

'12. Wherefore when a sudden earthquake awoke at midnight all in this province from their sleep, you, most prudent and wisest of men, prayed, being naked, and put one in mind of Adam and Eve in paradise. Their eyes being opened they blushed when they perceived their nakedness, and covered their secret parts with the leaves of trees; whereas you, naked alike as regards faith and dress, and terrified with a sudden fear, and having about you somewhat of your evening debauch, presented the uncomely part of your body before the eyes of the saints, that you might give proof of your discretion. Such are the Church's adversaries; these are the leaders who fight against the blood of the martyrs; orators of this sort thunder against the apostles; nay rather these are the mad dogs who bark against the disciples of Christ.

cantaro ex humeris dependente, et semper rubente facie, et spumantibus labiis, effrenatisque conviciis.

Nota de Vigilantio historiam curiosissimam.

Unde et in hac provincia quum subitus terræmotus, noctis medio omnes de somno excitasset; tu prudentissimus et sapientissimus mortalium nudus orabas, et referebas nobis Adam et Evam de paradiso: et illi quidem apertis oculis erubuerunt, nudos se esse cernentes, et verenda texerunt arborum foliis; tu et tunica et fide nudus, subitoque timore perterritus, et aliquid habens nocturnæ crapulæ, sanctorum oculis obscænam partem corporis ingerebas, ut tuam indicares prudentiam.

Tales habet adversarios Ecclesia. Hi duces contra Martyrum sanguinem dimicant; hujuscemodi oratores contra Apostolos pertonant, immo tam rabidi canes contra Christi latrant discipulos.

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'13. I confess my fear, lest it should proceed from superstition. Whenever I have been angry and have planned some mischief in my heart, and a vision of the night has deceived me, I dare not enter the churches of the saints, I trembled so in mind and body. You may perhaps laugh and jeer as if these were the ravings of women. I do not blush for the faith of those who first saw the Lord on His resurrection, who were sent to the apostles, who were commended to the holy apostles in the mother of the Lord the Saviour. Do you belch with the men of the world; I will fast with women, yea, with religious men, who exhibit their chastity in their countenance, and bearing faces pallid with constant abstinence, display the modesty of Christians.

Mortifications.

'14. You appear to me to be sad on another account; lest if abstinence, and sobriety, and fasting gain a footing among the inhabitants of Gaul, your taverns should have no profit, and you should be unable to pass the livelong night in these devil's vigils and drunken feastings.

Ego confiteor timorem meum, ne forsitan de superstitione descendat. Quando iratus fuero; et aliquid mali in meo animo cogitavero; et me nocturnum phantasma deluserit, basilicas Martyrum intrare non audeo: ita totus et corpore et animo pertremisco. Rideas forsitan, et mulierculârum deliramenta subsannes. Non erubesco earum fidem, quæ primæ viderunt Dominum resurgentem, quæ mittuntur ad Apostolos; quæ in matre Domini Salvatoris, sanctis Apostolis commendantur. Tu ructato cum sæculi hominibus, ego jejunabo cum feminis, immo cum religiosis viris, qui pudicitiam vultu præferunt, et pallida jugi continentia ora portantes, Christi ostendunt verecundiam. Videris mihi dolere et aliud, ne si inoleverit apud Gallos continentia et sobrietas atque jejunium, tabernæ tuæ lucra non habeant; et vigilias diaboli ac temulenta convivia tota nocte exercere non possis.

Timebat interdum Hieronymus basilicas intrare Martyrum.

Mulierum commendatio.

Lepide carpit Vigilantium cauponem.

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On alms sent to Jerusalem and elsewhere.

Besides, I have been told by the same letters, that you forbid any pecuniary assistance to be sent to Jerusalem for the use of the saints, against the authority of the apostle Paul, yea, even of Peter, and James, and John, who gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, and commanded them to be mindful of the poor. I presume, if I reply to this, you will immediately growl out that I am pleading my own cause, you who have given gifts to all with such liberality, that unless you had come to Jerusalem, and lavished your own money, or your patron's, we had all been in danger of starving. I say what the blessed apostle Paul says in almost all his epistles, and commands the churches of the gentiles, that on the first day of the week, that is, on the Lord's day, all ought to contribute somewhat to be sent to Jerusalem for the relief of the saints, either by the disciples or by persons approved by themselves; and that if it were expedient, he himself would either send or convey what had been collected. In the

Præterea iisdem ad me relatum est Epistolis, quod contra auctoritatem Apostoli Pauli, immo Petri, Johannis et Jacobi, qui dextras dederunt Paulo et Barnabæ communicationis, et præceperunt eis, ut pauperum memores essent, tu prohibeas Jerosolymam in usus Sanctorum aliqua sumtuum solatia dirigi. Videlicet si ad hæc respondero, statim latrabis, meam me caussam agere, qui tanta cunctos largitate donasti, ut nisi venisses Jerosolymam, et tuas vel patronorum tuorum pecunias effudisses, omnes periclitaremur fame.

Vigilantius quid prohibebat?

Ego hoc loquor, quod beatus Apostolus Paulus in cunctis pœne epistolis suis loquitur, et præcipit Ecclesiis Gentium per unam sabbathi, hoc est die Dominico, omnes conferre debere quæ Jerosolymam in Sanctorum solatia dirigantur; et vel per discipulos suos, vel per quos ipsi *probaverint, et si dignum fuerit, ipse aut dirigat, aut perferat

Collectæ in die Dominico.

* *elegerunt*, MS. D.

Acts of the Apostles also, speaking to Felix the governor, he says, "Now after many years, I came to Jerusalem, to bring alms to my nation, and offerings; whereupon they found me purified in the temple." Might he not distribute in another part of the world, and amongst the churches, whose infancy he had trained up by his doctrine, what he had received from others? But he desired to be liberal to the poor of those Christian localities, who leaving their scanty possessions for the sake of Christ, were converted with the whole heart to the service of the Lord. It would be tedious were I to go over every passage from all his epistles in which he treats of this, and is anxious from the bottom of his heart that money be sent to the faithful at Jerusalem and [other] Christian places, not for avarice but for relief; not for the amassing of riches, but for supplying the weakness of the body, and avoiding cold and want. This custom remains in Judæa even to the present day, not only amongst us but amongst the Hebrews;

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Acts xxiv. 17, 18.

quod collectum est. In Actibus quoque Apostolorum loquens ad Felicem præsidem: *Post annos*, ait, *plures, eleemosynas facturus in gentem meam, veni Jerosolymam, et oblationes et vota, in quibus invenerunt me purificatum in Templo.* Numquid in alia parte terrarum, et in Ecclesiis, quas nascentes fide sua erudiebat, quæ ab aliis acceperat, dividere non poterat? *Sed Sanctorum locorum pauperibus dare cupiebat, qui suas pro Christo facultatulas relinquentes, ad Domini servitutem tota mente conversi sunt. Longum est nunc si de cunctis Epistolis ejus omnia testimonia revolvere voluero, in quibus hoc agit; et tota mente festinat, ut Jerosolymam et ad sancta loca credentibus pecuniæ dirigantur, non in avaritiam, sed in refrigerium: non ad divitias congregandas, sed ad imbecillitatem corpusculi sustentandam, et frigus atque inediam declinandam. Hac in Judæa usque hodie perseverante consuetudine, non solum apud nos, sed et apud Hebræos:

Act. xxiv. 17, 18.

* *Sed pauperibus sanctis dare*, MS. D. Sanctorum locorum pauperes.

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that they who meditate upon the law of the Lord day and night, and have no portion in the land saving God alone, should be supported by the ministration of the synagogue and of the whole world; and that only by an equality, not that some should be eased and others burdened, but that the abundance of some might supply the wants of others.

'15. You will answer that *every one may do this in his own country, and that there will be no scarcity of poor people to be supported by the riches of the Church.* Nor do we deny that alms are to be extended to all the poor, even to Jews and Samaritans, if the sum contributed be adequate. But the apostle teaches us that alms are to be given to all, but chiefly to those who are of the household of faith. Concerning whom the Saviour spake also in the gospel, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Can those persons attain everlasting habitations whose raging lust domineers over their rags and filthiness

Gal. vi. 10.

Works of merit.

Luke xvi. 9.

Consuetudo eleemosynarum apud Hebræos et Christianos.

ut qui in Lege Domini meditantur die ac nocte, et partem non habent in terra, nisi solum Deum, synagogarum et totius orbis foveantur ministeriis; ex æqualitate dumtaxat; non ut aliis refrigerium et aliis sit tribulatio: sed ut aliorum abundantia aliorum sustentet inopiam.

2 Cor. viii.

Respondebis, hoc unumquemque posse in patria sua facere: nec pauperes defuturos, qui Ecclesiæ opibus sustentandi sint. Nec nos negamus cunctis pauperibus etiam Judæis et Samaritanis, si tanta sit largitas, stipes porrigendas. Sed Apostolus faciendam quidem *docet ad omnes eleemosynam, sed maxime ad domesticos fidei. De quibus et Salvator in Evangelio loquebatur: *Facite vobis amicos de mammona iniquitatis, qui vos recipiant in æterna tabernacula.* *[Numquid isti pauperes, inter

* *dicit*, MS. D.

Eleemosynæ quibus potissimum faciendæ.

Luc. xvi. 9.

Mali pauperes.

* Omitted in MS. D.

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of body? who possess neither things present nor things to come? For those who are styled blessed, are not the simply poor, but the poor in spirit, concerning whom it is written, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the day of trouble." In relieving the common herd of the poor there is no need of discrimination, but of almsgiving. In relieving the Christian poor there is the blessedness of understanding to give to him who blushes to receive, and is pained when he receives, reaping carnal things and sowing things spiritual. But when he says that they who spend their own property, and distribute to the poor by little and little the proceeds of their possessions, do better than they who give up their whole property at once, the answer shall proceed not from me, but from the Lord: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and come and follow Me." He speaks to him who wishes to be perfect; who with the apostles leaves

Ps. xli. 1.

Matt. xix. 21.

quorum pannos et illuviem corporis, flagrans libido dominatur, possunt habere æterna tabernacula?] qui nec præsentia possident, nec futura? Non enim simpliciter pauperes, sed pauperes spiritu beati appellantur: de quibus scriptum est: ***Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem, in die mala liberabit eum Dominus.*** In vulgi pauperibus sustentandis nequaquam intellectu, sed eleemosyna opus est. In Sanctis pauperibus beatitudo est intelligentiæ, ut ei tribuat, qui erubescit accipere: et quum acceperit, dolet: metens carnalia, et seminans spiritalia. Quod autem asserit eos melius facere, qui utuntur rebus suis, et paulatim fructus possessionum suarum pauperibus dividunt, quam illos qui possessionibus venundatis, semel omnia largiuntur, non a me ei, sed a Domino respondebitur; ***Si vis esse perfectus, vade, vende omnia quæ habes, et da pauperibus: et veni, sequere Me.*** Ad eum loquitur, qui vult esse perfectus, qui cum Apostolis patrem,

Ps. xl. 1.

Matt. xix. 21.

A. D. 406.

father, and boat, and net. He whom you praise is of the second or third grade; him we also commend, whilst, at the same time, we know that the first is to be placed before the second and third.

'16. Nor are monks to be deterred from their purpose by you with your serpent's tongue and most savage worrying, about whom you argue and say, *If all should shut themselves up and live in solitude, who will serve the churches? who will win the men of the world? who will exhort sinners to virtue?* For if all are silly in this sort with you, who can be a wise man? And virginity will be no longer praiseworthy. For if all were virgins, there will be no marriages, the human race will become extinct, there will be no children squalling in the cradles, the unhired midwives will go a-begging, and Dormitantius, shrunk up with the extremity of the cold, will keep vigils in his solitary bed. This virtue is a rare one; nor is it coveted by many. But I do indeed wish that all were such as are the few of whom it is said,

Monks and celibates.

naviculam et rete dimittit. Iste quem tu laudas, secundus aut tertius gradus est, quem et nos recipimus, dummodo sciamus prima secundis et tertiis præferenda.

Vita ac conditio veri Monachi.

Nec a suo studio Monachi deterrendi sunt à te linguâ vipereâ et morsu sævissimo, de quibus argumentaris et dicis: Si omnes se clauserint* et fuerint in solitudine, quis celebrabit Ecclesias? quis sæculares homines lucrifaciet? quis peccantes ad virtutes poterit cohortari? Hoc enim modo si omnes tecum fatui sint, sapiens quis esse poterit? Et virginitas non erit approbanda. Si enim omnes virgines fuerint, nuptiæ non erunt: interibit* humanum genus: infantes in cunis non vagient, obstetrices absque mercedibus mendicabunt: et gravissimo frigore solus atque contractus Dormitantius vigilabit in lectulo. Rara est virtus, nec à pluribus appetitur. Atque utinam hoc omnes essent, quod pauci

*MSS. reclauserint.

* omnes, add. MS. D.

Rara est virtus.

'Many be called, but few chosen." The prisons would then be empty. But the monk occupies the place of the mourner, not of the teacher; he is to grieve for himself and the world; and to await in trembling the Lord's coming; knowing his own weakness, and how frail is the body which he bears, he fears to offend, lest he stumble, and fall, and be broken. Wherefore he shuns to look upon women, those of the younger sort especially; and so chastens himself as to be apprehensive even of such things as are harmless. A. D. 406. Matt. xx. 16.

'17. You will say, Why do you go to the desert? For this reason, that I may not hear you nor see you; that I be not moved by your madness; that I may not suffer from your attacks; that the eye of the harlot lead me not captive; that beauty seduce me not to unlawful embraces. *This is not fighting*, you will answer, *but flying. Stand in the front of the battle; in your armour resist your enemies; that you may be crowned when you shall have conquered.* I confess my weakness. I am un- Hermits and anchorites.

sunt, de quibus dicitur: *Multi vocati, pauci electi:* vacui essent carceres. Monachus autem non doctoris habet, sed plangentis officium: qui vel se, vel mundum lugeat, et Domini pavidus præstoletur adventum: qui sciens imbecillitatem suam, et vas fragile quod portat, timet offendere, ne impingat, et corruat atque frangatur. Unde et mulierum, maximeque adolescentularum vitat aspectum, et in tantum castigator sui est, ut etiam quæ tuta sunt pertimescat. Matt. xx. 16, et xx. 14. Vitandi monacho aspectus mulierum.

Cur, inquies, pergis ad eremum? Videlicet ut te non audiam, non videam: ut tuo furore non movear; ut tua bella non patiar: ne me capiat oculus meretricis; ne forma pulcherrima ad illicitos ducat amplexus. Respondebis: hoc non est pugnare, sed fugere. Sta in acie, adversariis armatus obsiste: ut postquam viceris, coroneris. Fateor imbecillitatem meam. Nolo spe pugnare victoriæ, ne perdam Fugienda vitia, et vitiorum occasiones.

A. D. 406.

willing to fight in the hope of victory, lest I lose the victory at the last. If I fly, I have escaped the sword; if I keep my ground I must either conquer or die. Why should I be compelled to abandon a certainty, that I may pursue an uncertainty? Death may be avoided either with the shield or the feet. You who fight, may either be conquered or conquer. I, who run away, shall not be conquered, since I fly; but I fly for this reason, that I be not conquered. There is no safety in sleeping near a serpent. It may happen that it does not bite me, but it may happen that it does bite me. Mothers we designate sisters and daughters, and do not blush to cover our vices with names of devotion. What has a monk to do in the cells of women? What is the meaning of those solitary and private conversations, and eyes which avoid witnesses? Holy love has no impatience. What we have said of lust we may apply to avarice, and to all vices which are avoided by solitude. And therefore we shun

aliquando victoriam. Si fugero, gladium devitavi: si stetero, aut vincendum mihi est, aut cadendum. Quid autem necesse est certa dimittere, et incerta sectari? Aut scuto, aut pedibus mors vitanda est. Tu qui pugnas, et superari potes, et vincere. Ego cum fugero, non vincar in eo quod fugio: sed ideo fugio, ne vincar. Nulla securitas est vicino serpente dormire. Potest fieri, ut me non mordeat; tamen potest fieri ut aliquando me mordeat. Matres vocamus sorores et filias, et non erubescimus vitiis nostris nomina pietatis obtendere. Quid facit Monachus in cellulis feminarum? Quid sibi volunt sola et privata colloquia, et arbitros fugientes *oculi? Sanctus amor impatientiam non habet. Quod de libidine diximus, referamus ad avaritiam, et ad omnia vitia quæ vitantur solitudine. Et idcirco urbium frequentias declinamus, ne facere compellamur quæ nos non tam natura cogit facere, quàm voluntas.

Certa non sunt dimittenda, et incerta sectanda.

Nomina pietatis vitiis obtendere.

* oculos sordidos, MS. D.

the crowds of cities, lest we be driven to do not so much what nature compels us to do as inclination. A. D. 406.

'18. I have dictated these observations at the request, as I have already said, of the holy presbyters, during the study of a single night, in consequence of the extreme haste of brother Sisinnius, who is about to proceed to Egypt for the relief of the saints; otherwise the subject itself exhibited open blasphemy, demanding rather the indignation of the writer than a string of testimonies. But if Dormitantius should again keep vigils to abuse me, and think it necessary to slander me also with the same blasphemous mouth with which he pulls in pieces the apostles and martyrs, I will keep watch, not with a short treatise, but during the whole night, for the benefit of him and his associates, yea, of his disciples and masters; who, unless they see the swelling bellies of the wives, esteem their husbands unworthy of the Christian priesthood.

This treatise was written in one night.

Hæc, ut dixi, sanctorum Presbyterorum rogatu, unius noctis lucubratione dictavi, festinante admodum fratre Sisinnio, et propter Sanctorum refrigeria ad Ægyptum ire properante: alioquin et ipsa materia apertam habuit blasphemiam, quæ indignationem magis scribentis, quàm testimoniorum multitudinem flagitaret. Quòd si Dormitantius in mea rursus maledicta vigilaverit, et eodem ore blasphemo, quo Apostolos et Martyres lacerat, de me quoque putaverit detrahendum, nequaquam illi brevi lucubratiuncula, sed tota nocte vigilabo, et sociis illius immò discipulis vel magistris, qui nisi tumentes uteros viderint feminarum, maritos earum Christi ministerio arbitrantur indignos.—S. Hier. Opera, tom. iv. pars ii. p. 280—289. Benedictine Edition, Paris, fol. 1706.

Aperta blasphemia indignationem flagitat.

## CHAP. XIX.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A.D. 406.

Examination of the treatise against Vigilantius.

**The wrath of Jerome against Vigilantius was so vehemently expressed, in his treatise against the Gallic reformer, that it seems to have hurried him beyond all the bounds of reason. He was no longer himself. He forgot and mis-stated facts, and rushed into the conflict as if he had lost all self-command.**

Par. 1.

The very first paragraph of the diatribe contains a misrepresentation. After bewildering his imagination, and inflating his sentences with the *Centaurs*, *Nemean lions*, *Chimæras*, and *Geryons* of antiquity, Jerome declares that Gaul had never had any monstrous heretics. '*Gaul alone has had no monsters—suddenly arose Vigilantius.*' Philastrius, bishop of Brescia, a contemporary of Jerome, tells a very different story.* 'The Manichees,' said

Jerome's mis-statement as to the spiritual condition of Gaul.

* Marvellous inconsistency! Jerome, in a letter addressed to Theodora, a few years before, had stated (quoting Irenæus) that Gaul, and the regions about the Rhone and the Garonne, were the first scenes of the heresies of Marcus.—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 561.

he, 'are said to lurk in Spain, and in the five provinces of Gaul, and to captivate many by their artifices.'* Again, 'In Gaul, Spain, and Aquitain there are *Abstinents*, who follow the pernicious line of the Gnostics and Manichees.' † A. D. 406.

The Priscillianist heresy also found its way into Gaul, according to Sulpicius Severus,‡ and there is a sad story told by Fleury § of the violent outburst of the populace at Bordeaux,‖ who stoned a woman named Urbica to death, for attempting to propagate the dogmas of Priscillian, in the year 386. It may be added, that Sulpicius complains of the perpetual religious disputes in Gaul, and that Ambrose ¶ declared he had often been hindered from going into Gaul by the divisions among the Gallic bishops.

Substance of Jerome's charges against Vigilantius.

Jerome accuses Vigilantius of *fighting with his unclean spirit against the Spirit of Christ:* and he supports his charge by stating that Vigilantius

* Phil. de Hæresibus, apud Bib. Pat. Paris, 1624, p. 16.

† Ibid. p. 21.

‡ 'Sed iter eis præter interiorem Aquitaniæ fuit: ubi tum ab imperitis magnificè suscepti sparsere perfidiæ semina.'—Sacræ His. Sulp. Sev. ii. 69.

§ Translation of Fleury. Ox. ed. vol. i. p. 69.

‖ Ausonius alludes to the Priscillianist heresy, and to its abettors in Aquitain, in the following lines, forming part of his poetical address to Delphidius:—

'Minus malorum munere expertus Dei,
Medio quòd ævi raptus es:
Errore quòd non deviantis filiæ,
Pœnaque læsus conjugis.'

V. Ausonii Professores. 196. Valpy's ed. vol. i. p. 244.

¶ Ambr. de Obitu Valent.

A. D. 406. denied that '*the sepulchres of the martyrs are to be venerated;*' *asserted that vigils are to be condemned;* p. 390. *and* '*that Hallelujah is never to be sung except at Easter;*' '*that continence is heresy, and chastity the nursery of lust.*'

Hallelujah. The charge as to Hallelujah is unintelligible for want of further information, but the probability is, that Vigilantius committed no greater offence than that (of which many others were guilty) of desiring to confine the singing of Hallelujah to the seasons of the great festivals, and perhaps to Easter,* in conformity with ancient custom. Differences of opinion existed at this period, on several observances of the church, and on this, among the rest. 'During the fifty days' rejoicing, from Easter to Pentecost, Hallelujah is sung, and prayer is offered standing. I know not, says St. Augustine, whether standing in prayer on those days, and on all Sundays, is observed everywhere. *There are places where Hallelujah is sung at other seasons, but it is sung everywhere at Easter.*' †

We have no evidence, nor any just reason to believe that Vigilantius spoke of *continence* as a *heresy*, or of *chastity* as a *nursery of vice.* He may have said that certain doctrines as to the merit

* 'Gregory the Great (Epist. 12. lib. ix.) affirms that it was used first by Christians in the church at Jerusalem, where it was appointed for Easter, and the interval succeeding until Whitsunday. The custom of confining the use of this doxology in the church to those stated times long prevailed.'—See Riddle's 'Christian Antiquities,' p. 334. See some further information on this subject given by Baronius, sub. an. 384, vol. iv. p. 538.

† Fleury's Eccl. Hist. Ox. Trans. vol. i. p. 355.

and efficacy of continence were heretical, and that compulsory rules of chastity produced a contrary effect; and he may have agreed with Jovinian in the opinions ascribed to him; viz. that virgins have no greater merit than virtuous widows and married women; that there should be no distinction of meats; that those who had been baptized in faith could not be overcome by the devil; and that all the good would be equally rewarded in heaven (see supra, p. 254). A. D. 406.

'*The dumb Quintilian:*' this was nothing more than one of Jerome's sorry jokes. As the Quintilian of Calagorris in Spain was an eloquent man, so Vigilantius of Calagorris in Gaul was a dull fellow, who could not speak at all to the purpose. p. 390.

The perpetual recurrence, in this Treatise, of insinuations against the moral character of Vigilantius, would have been supported by reference to time, place, and circumstance, as I have before remarked, had there been any just ground for them. Jerome would not have lost the advantage of making his case good in this respect, had he been able to substantiate the indictment. Unsupported insinuations.

'*The innkeeper of Calagorris.*' '*The adulterator of wine.*' '*In your taverns.*' '*Provoke them to drink for your benefit.*' These expressions seem to imply that Vigilantius was a tavern-keeper when Jerome wrote. But the custom of the church and the silence of history satisfy us, that it was nothing more than an ill-natured allusion to the humble origin of Vigilantius, who could not have been the priest of a parish at the same time that he kept an pp. 390, 401.

A. D. 406. inn at Calagorris. He might, in his early days, have been employed about some wine-cellar or vineyard. As to the accusations of having '*revelled with the laity*,' '*indulged in his cups*,' '*given reins to his lust*;' of '*vomiting the surfeit of his supper*,' '*belching up liquor with women*,' of being '*drunk and snoring*,' '*avaricious*,' '*debauched*,' '*gluttonous*,' &c., they are mixed up with statements, that he sung psalms, cultivated sacred music,* read and wrote commentaries,† expounded scripture, and expended money in transcribing and circulating copies of holy writ.‡ We may therefore set it all down as empty declamation or coarse abuse,§ and answer Jerome in his own words, 'Rhetoricaris, et à disputationum spinetis ad campos liberæ declamationis excurris.'‖

When Augustine was inveighing against the errors of the Manichees, he was so fearful lest he should not be able to distinguish between truth and error, that he prayed that he might not be carried too far by his indignation. 'May the omniscient God grant,' said he, 'that my mind may remain calm and unprejudiced in this con-

* 'Psalmorum modulatione mulcetur,' p. 391.

† 'Tibi soli licet de cunctis et Græcis et Latinis Tractatoribus ferre sententiam,' &c. p. 345. 'Desine me voluminibus tuis obruere,' p. 348.

‡ 'Parce saltem nummis tuis, quibus notarios librariosque conducens,' &c. ib.

§ On all occasions Jerome was in the habit of using coarse language whether he addressed friend or foe. See his Epistles to Læta and Jovinian.

‖ Hier. Op. 4 pars ii. p. 290.

troversy.' But Jerome, instead of setting bounds to his fury, rushed into the very thick of falsehood and calumny, and adopted the same mode of attack which the heathen accusers practised against the early Christians. This has been the artifice of persecutors at all times: they attempt to stifle reformers by making them objects of abhorrence, and by imputing scandalous immorality to them. 'That our enemies may not seem to hate us without reason, they accuse us of abominable feasts, and incestuous intercourse in our religious assemblies,' said a Christian philosopher of the second century. Sensuality and Thyestean banquets have not only been laid to the charge of the people of God, from the times of Pliny, Minucius Felix, Celsus, Athenagoras, and Tertullian, to those of the Paulicians, Waldenses, Albigenses, and Bohemian brethren; but the accusations have been worded in the same language,—in many cases sentence by sentence,—as if the dregs of pagan calumnies, and the form of the indictment used of old, would serve on all occasions.* Jerome did not exactly do this; the gravamen, however, of his invectives against the moral character of Vigilantius was, that he indulged in carnal sins, in drunkenness, and corrupt intercourse with loose companions. But inasmuch as Jerome did not fortify his charges by one single explanatory testimony, we may pronounce them to be nothing

A. D. 406.

Old calumnies revived.

* There is a striking instance of this in Stephen de Borbon's account of the Waldenses. See Echart's 'Scriptores Ordinis Prædicatorum,' vol. i. p. 193. See also the story given by Walter Mapes.

A. D. 406. more than the basest slander, and dismiss them with the indignant protest of Tertullian. 'When others are accused, you demand in corroboration of the acts, the number of the perpetrators, the place, manner, time, accomplice, companions. In our case no precaution of this kind is taken, though it is equally right that whatever is asserted should be thoroughly sifted.' *

Par. 2, 3. In the second and third paragraphs of his attack on Vigilantius, Jerome repeats, but with more emphasis, what he had before intimated in his

pp. 391, 393. letter to Riparius: '*He is said to have bishops associated with him in his crime.—Riparius and Desiderius write to me, that their parishes are contaminated by the vicinity of this man, and that some have been found to favour their own vices by acquiescing in his blasphemies.* Two years before, one

p. 397. bishop only is mentioned, as acquiescing in opinion with the reformer on the subject of clerical celibacy and other innovations. That bishop, indeed, was his own diocesan, and very probably, the exemplary Exuperius. But now we learn that many more had declared themselves in his favour, and that divers bishops preferred to have married clergy rather than those who professed celibacy. During the first three centuries

Celibacy. no vows of continence had been exacted † as a condition of ordination. The ecclesiastical law,‡ which constrained bishops, priests, and deacons

* Tertul. Apol. c. 2. † See Bingham. Antiq. b. 4. c. 5.

‡ It was proposed, but not carried, at the Council of Nice. Socr. lib. i. c. 17.

to surrender their nuptial privileges, was not inserted among the inviolable papal decrees, until after the middle of the fourth century, although it must be admitted that it had previously become a *custom* of the church, from the time of Cyprian, to denounce clerical marriages as impure and unholy. But this determination on the part of certain Gallic bishops, to resist the yoke, whether imposed by decree or custom, shews that it had not primitive antiquity for its authority. It was notorious, too, that many men, who professed to abstain from the company of women, because they had been ordained, became a scandal to the church, in consequence of the liberties they allowed themselves.* It is to be recommended, therefore, said Vigilantius, on the apostolical principle, 'Better to marry than to burn,' that the clergy should allow themselves to marry, rather than pretend to the sanctity of single life, and indulge in forbidden intercourse. For this he was accused of '*giving the reins to lust*,' and of '*redoubling the natural warmth of the flesh:*' and the bishops† who agreed with him were exposed

A. D. 406.

p. 392.

* Chrysostom was unsparing in his exposure of the flagitious conduct of professed celibates of each sex; and Jerome himself has given a pretty sample of the irregularities of virgins and monks in his epistle, 'Ad Sabinianum lapsum;' and in his epistle to Eustochium, No. 86, alias 27, he shows how difficult it was to keep the young women in order who had entered the monasteries. 'Lascivientem adolescentularum carnem crebris et duplicatis frangebat jejuniis,' &c.—See Hieron. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 682.

† We are not told who these bishops were. The tide in favour of asceticism ran so strongly at the end of the fourth, and beginning of the fifth century, that the opponents of the system espoused by

to the flippant charge of *conferring ordination on those only who had pregnant wives or squalling infants.* The extravagance of such odious language convicts Jerome of falsehood.

In the fourth paragraph of the Treatise we have an account of the origin and birthplace of Vigilantius, with an incidental sentence which informs us, that he did not confine his endeavours to reform the church to his own locality, but that he visited various parts of Gaul with this object in view. '*He invaded the churches of Gaul,*' said Jerome, '*and instead of the standard of the cross he carried*

Jerome were silenced, and their written remonstrances suppressed. In an age remarkable for its controversies, when almost every bishop took part in the discussions of the day, not even the names of those who protested against the false miracles of Martin, and of those who supported Vigilantius in his proposed reforms, have been preserved. All we know is, that the following contemporary bishops presided over Gallic dioceses, at no great distance from that in which Vigilantius officiated:

| | |
|---|---|
| Sedonius, at Aix. | Diogenianus, at Albi. |
| Amandus, at Bordeaux. | Quintinus, at Apt. |
| Jacobus, at Ambrun. | Constantius, at Orange. |
| Hilarius, at Narbonne. | Paulinus, at Beziers. |
| Exuperius, at Tholouse. | Alitheus, at Cahors, |
| Simplicius, at Vienne. | Constantinus, at Die. |
| Proculus, at Marseilles. | Vincentius, at Digne. |
| Elpidius, at Lyons. | Domnianus, at Grenoble. |
| Crocus, at Nismes. | |

—See Gallia Christiana.

' Et nunc, cum maxime discordiis episcoporum turbari aut misceri omnia cernerentur, cunctaque per eos odio aut gratia, metu, inconstantia, invidia, factione, libidine, avaritia, arrogantia, somno, desidiâ essent depravata: postremo plures adversum paucos bene consulentes, insanis consiliis et pertinacibus studiis certabant: inter hæc plebs Dei, et optimus quisque probro atque ludibrio habebatur.' Such is the testimony given by Sulpicius Severus: (Sacr. Hist. lib. 2. c. 80) who in the midst of the severest reflections, admits that the majority of Gallic bishops opposed the innovations of a few like himself.

A. D. 406.

' *banner of the devil.*' Such is the monk's lan-
age to express our presbyter's honest attempt
remove superstitious rites and observances—
he very master-piece of Satan'—from the church,
d to restore the ensign of the gospel of Christ,
ıere it had been removed, or hidden beneath
ics, and tapers, and doubtful signs, and symbols
holiness. It was for this purpose that Vigilantius
ent from church to church (a fact which happily
mes out, albeit in the midst of Jerome's vilifi-
tions), conferred with bishops, gave and took
unsel, and made such an impression, not only in
s own neighbourhood, but far and wide, that
parius and Desiderius, despairing of any oppo-
ion to him on the part of the Gallic bishops,
plored Jerome to take up the matter, and to put
wn the troublesome reformer. The fact, of
lling on a champion in the East to vindicate the
use of the corrupt church against its impugners
the West, is of itself a proof that Vigilantius
d his doctrine were in favour from the Pyrenees
the Alps.

It was at the foot of the Pyrenees, as this para-
aph tells us, in the village of Calagorris (so
lled because it was originally built by a band of
surgents or robbers, whom Pompey forced to
ave their native place, Calagorris in Spain),
at Vigilantius was born and brought up, and
or near which he was residing, in the cha-
cter of a parish priest, as we learn from the
venth paragraph of the Treatise * (*since you*

* ' Quia ad radices Pyrenæi habitas,' p. 401.

A. D. 406. *dwell at the roots of the Pyrenees*), when Jerome assailed him. The name of his native village, Calagorris, has led to the mistake of supposing Vigilantius to be a Spaniard by birth, although Jerome spoke of him distinctly as a home-born enemy of Gaul.* Baronius was confused by it; and De Marca, and after him Pagi, took pains to rectify the error by copious notes on the subject.†

This paragraph contains two or three extracts from the book of Vigilantius, and enables us to determine whether, with such specimens of style and matter before us, we can pronounce with Jerome that the Pyrenean presbyter was either a blasphemer or a fool, unskilled in speaking, devoid of information, and unpolished in elocution.'

Relic worship. p. 395. ' *What obligation is there either to honour with so much reverence, or to adore that, I know not what to call it, which you carry about with you in a little box to worship?*

The reader must observe that it was *undue* honour, the honour of adoration, to which Vigilantius objected, and not the decent respect, due to the remains of the pious.

' *Why do you kiss in adoration the ashes which are folded up in a linen cloth? Under the pretext of religion, we see a custom introduced into the church, which is almost heathen, viz. the lighting up of a multitude of tapers, while the sun is yet shining, and people are kissing and adoring a small*

* Galliæ vernaculum hostem sustinent,' p. 394.

† See the treatise of De Marca, at the end of this chapter.

*quantity of dust, I know not whose,* in a little box folded up in costly linen.'* The word used by Vigilantius was *pulvisculum, a small quantity of dust.* (p. 395.) He meant to speak of the doubtful character of these minute particles. Paulinus tells us (see supra, 54), that it was the custom to enshrine the smallest speck, even a grain or scruple of sacred dust; and the story of St. Martin (see supra, p. 146), proving the honoured remains of a supposed saint to be nothing more than the bones of a robber, who had been executed for his crimes, shows that Vigilantius was justified in expressing his disapprobation of the undue honours paid to the ashes of they knew not whom. But this surely was not calling the ashes of the martyrs '*worthless dust*,' '*unclean cinders*,' or '*trampling upon them*,' or proposing that they should be '*thrown upon the dunghill*,' as Jerome insinuates, in the course of this treatise. If such, then, was Jerome's disingenuous use of his adversary's argument, and the distortion of his words in one place, are we rash in contending that he misrepresented him altogether? A. D. 406.

'*These are the men who think they are doing great honour with their paltry wax-tapers to the blessed martyrs, whom the Lamb in the midst of the throne illumines with all the brightness of his majesty.*'

* Vigilantius might well say this. Jerome was among those, who pretended that the bodies of the four virgin daughters of Philip the Evangelist were still to be seen at Cæsarea.'—Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 673.

A. D. 406.

These sentences lose much of their original force by being translated into English; but even so, do they not exhibit a command of diction, which justified the honest criticism of Gennadius, and the favourable opinion of Erasmus?* And do they not convince us that a writer, who so spoke the language of true veneration and faith, in regard to beatified spirits, was not likely to utter a word in disrespect of the blessed martyrs?

Vigilantius evidently had those beautiful passages of Isaiah and the Apocalypse in his recollection, when he spoke of the Lamb being the light of his saints. "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Isaiah lx. 19.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Rev. xxi. 23.

"And they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light." Rev. xxvii. 5.

The same thought which Vigilantius expressed so ably in prose, is thus rendered into verse in Heber's Palestine.

> 'Nor sun nor moon they need, nor day nor night,
> God is their temple, and the Lamb their light.'

* See supra, p. 357, 'Homo lingua politus.'—'Attamen quæ citat Hieronymus mediocrem dicendi mundiciem præ se ferunt.'—Erasm.

A. D. 406.

Par. 5.

The fifth paragraph begins with a striking repudiation of saint-worship, not only on the part of Jerome himself, but also, if he may be taken as its organ, of the Christian church at that period. '*Madman that thou art, who ever adored the martyrs?*'

This, no doubt, was in reply to some statement of Vigilantius, complaining of the superstitious invocation of departed saints, which was becoming a practice among some Christians: with Paulinus, for example, who addressed prayers to St. Felix. (see p. 87.) In Jerome's indignant protestation against being thought to worship any created being, we have a satisfactory proof, that whatever may have been the error of individuals on this subject, the church had not yet sanctioned the adoration of dead men.* At the end of this paragraph, he argues that the veneration of the relics of Samuel, which had just been translated with so much solemnity by the emperor Arcadius from Palestine to Thrace, was not to be regarded as any adoration of Samuel. Vigilantius, wiser than he, denounced the custom, as one which was sure to lead to the superstition which Jerome disclaimed. The result has proved two things—that Vigilantius had the eyes of his understanding opened, to see the tendency of the corruptions of the ecclesiastical system of the fourth century—and that the boasted consent of the Catholic

Jerome declares against praying to the saints.

* Chemnitius, in his Exam. Conc. Trid., examines this question at considerable length. See pages 547—651.

A.D. 406. church, from age to age, is an untenable assumption.

Jerome had disclaimed the worship or adoration of the relics of the martyrs, and the adoration even of the martyrs themselves, in his Letter to Riparius (see supra, p. 376; *non colimus, non adoramus*, were his words); and now he repeats his disclaimer, 'Madman, that thou art, who ever adored the martyrs'? He utterly denied that such was the practice of the church. But the times arrived, first, when a council of the church, the second Council of Nice, ruled, that 'the bones, ashes, blood, and sepulchres of the martyrs ought to be adored;' and afterwards, when a council of still greater authority, the Council of Trent, pronounced, that the decrees of the relic-adoring and saint-worshipping synod of Nice were binding on all Christians.

On this subject Chemnitius maintains that Jerome,* in the whole of his prolix and bitter invective against Vigilantius, did not write a line which intimated approbation of saint-worship; on the contrary, that he condemned it, and that his opinions therefore were at variance with those propounded by the Council of Trent. He also

* Erasmus has observed, that Jerome, in each of the prefaces to his Commentaries, invokes the assistance of the Holy Spirit, but never that of the Virgin Mary. In his Epistle, however, to Theodora, on the death of her brother, he expresses his belief that the spirits of the departed aid the living.—See Hier. Op. 4. pars ii. p. 580. In his 'Epitaphium Paulæ,' his expressions also approach very near to those of adoration: 'Vale, O Paula, et cultoris tui ultimam senectutem orationibus juva.'—Ibid. p. 688.

quotes Augustine and the almost contemporary Council of Laodicea to the same effect.* A.D. 406.

A.D. 364.

In the sixth paragraph Jerome cites, as a passage from Vigilantius, a sentence, in which the Reformer, objecting to the homage paid to saints at their graves, as if their souls were there, represents the souls of the apostles and martyrs to be reposing in some place of enjoyment, which they cannot leave to be present either at their tombs or elsewhere. There is no appearance of levity in the words quoted, but such expressions as *senatorial rank,—fortunate islands and Elysian fields,*—foisted in by Jerome, savour more of profane than sacred reading. The idea expressed by Vigilantius is rather that of the saints' confinement to their place of repose, than of any particular locality, for '*Abraham's bosom*,' and '*under the altar of God*,' are the terms used by our presbyter. Jerome meets the objection with the verse in Revelations, "They follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth,"† and asks 'Since the devils wander over the whole world, why may not the spirits of the martyrs do the same?'

Par. 6.

p. 398. On the condition of the souls of departed saints.

Mark the inconsistency of the polemic. If, as Jerome asserts in the seventh paragraph, the martyrs, having obtained their crowns and their triumphs, are in a condition to interpose in be-

Par. 7.

* Chem. Exam. Conc. Trid. De Invoc. Sanct. pars iii. p. 641.

† This is one of the most obscure passages in the book of Revelations. To answer his own purpose, Jerome refers to the book of Revelations; but in one of his Epistles he omits this book, when he recommends all the others, in order, for general perusal. I have mislaid my reference.

A.D. 406. half of those on earth, then there is some show of reason why they may be invoked in prayer. But 'Who ever adored the martyrs?' 'We do not adore the angels, nor the archangels, nor the cherubim, nor the seraphim!' Such are his declarations in other places. It is impossible for us to know what the spirits of the departed can, or cannot do: therefore Vigilantius, in the midst of the uncertain and contradictory opinions which prevailed on the subject, rose above the superstitious feelings of the age, and dissuaded from praying to or for the dead. '*After we are dead*,' said he, '*the prayer of none for another can be heard*.'

Vigilantius referred to a passage in one of the books of Esdras, in support of his opinion, that prayers ought not to be offered to the dead.* In reply to this Jerome declared the book to be
p. 400. apocryphal, and *one which the church does not receive*, and added, '*Which book I have never read*.' These were strange assertions for such a commentator and translator of holy writ as Jerome to make.† Surely they were but random assertions, like many others of his petulant remarks, for how could he

* Most probably 2 Esdras vii. 36—44.

† 'St. Innocent includes in the Canon of Scripture the books of Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, Tobias, Judith, the *two books of Esdras*, and the two books of Maccabees, agreeing in this with the Council of Carthage, A.D. 397.' 'The Council of Trent declared that it received these six ecclesiastical books, as also the book of Baruch, with equal veneration, as proceeding from the mouth of Christ, or dictated by the Holy Ghost;' and added, 'if any refuse to admit them for sacred and canonical, let him be anathema.' The above is part of a note in vol. ii. p. 122, of the Oxford translation of Fleury.

venture to pronounce the book of Esdras to be unworthy of being quoted *except by Vigilantius and such as he*, unless he had read it. I notice this to show how reckless the monk was when he was bent on pulling an adversary to pieces. What he meant by charging Vigilantius with '*quoting as Solomon's a passage*' *which Solomon never wrote*, does not appear. The concluding insinuations in this paragraph are disgraceful to the writer, and reflect more dishonour upon the calumniator than upon the calumniated, being unsupported, as I have to repeat, by a tittle of evidence, or by any thing in any contemporary author, which casts the slightest suspicion on the moral character of Vigilantius.

A. D. 406.

p. 401.

'*You are a follower of the incredible monstrosities of the ancient heretic Basilides, and of his blundering doctrine, and you propound that which is condemned by the authority of the whole world. For in your petty commentary you quote, as if making for you, a passage of Solomon, which Solomon indeed never wrote, in order that you, who have a second Esdras, should also have a second Solomon.*'

More calumnies.

p. 401.

'*Read, if you are inclined, the pretended revelations of all the patriarchs and prophets, and when you have learnt them, chant them in the women's weaving-shops; nay rather offer them for perusal in your taverns, that you may the more easily induce the unlearned by these ballads to drink.*'

There is nothing in any one passage attributed by Jerome to Vigilantius, which justifies his being compared to Basilides, who was one of the chief

leaders of the Gnostics in the second century. — Basilides was eminently fanciful and visionary. He defended the doctrine of the Seven Æons, and averred that from two of these, called *Power* and *Wisdom*, proceeded the highest order of angelic beings. Upon this notion he grafted many others equally fantastic and derogatory from the glory of the Supreme. Now the whole system advocated by Vigilantius was the very reverse of what may be termed visionary; but Basilides was also accused of encouraging profligacy, and it was for this reason that Jerome put Vigilantius among the followers of that heretic.

0. The next paragraphs revert to topics previously treated upon, and profess to refute the objections of Vigilantius to the use of tapers and wax-lights at the shrines and in the churches, to the veneration of relics and to vigils.

nd its. Jerome denied that candles were lighted in the day-time, during religious services, for the reasons assigned by Vigilantius: but assuredly the practice was becoming common,* and justified the warning voice of Vigilantius, who protested against adopting any customs of the kind in imitation of idolatrous worship. It was forbidden to the ancient church of God to imitate the religious practice of the gentiles, and he considered that the Church of Christ ought also to abstain from them. The use of wax-lights, in processions, was notoriously of heathen origin.

* Paulinus boasted that lights were burning day and night in honour of St. Felix. 'Nocte dieque micant.'—Natal. 3. 102.

The Council of Eliberis prohibited it,* and Lactantius denounced it in language quite as strong as any which Vigilantius could have uttered. 'They light up candles to God, as if he lived in the dark; do they not therefore deserve to pass for madmen who offer lamps to the author and giver of light?' A.D. 406.

Jerome quotes Psalm cxix. 105, Matt. xxv. 1, Luke xii. 35, John v. 35, in defence of the custom. He might as well have cited Virgil,

'O *Lux* Dardaniæ, spes O fidissima Teucrum.'—Æn. ii. 281.

or Homer,

'Νύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δᾴδων ὑπολαμπομενάων
Ἠγίνεον ἀνὰ ἄστυ.'—Il. xviii. 493.

In deprecation of the custom of administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper upon the altars or tombs, under which the bones of the apostles and martyrs were deposited, Vigilantius had asked, '*Do the souls of the martyrs love their own ashes; do they hover about them, and are they always present there, lest if a votary should come during their absence his invocation would not be heard?*' Sacramental services over the relics of martyrs.

This sensible way of showing the absurdity of the practice raised the anger of Jerome to such a pitch, that he stigmatized it as the dregs of the heresy of Eunomius and of the Caïnan heresy,† p. 404.

* 'Cereos per diem placuit in cœmeterio non incendi.'

† The Cainites were a branch of the Gnostics, who spoke contemptuously of martyrdom in the second century: so called from

A. D. 406. and imputed to Vigilantius a contempt for martyrdom altogether—'*I wonder you do not tell us that martyrdoms ought to be exploded, for God, who requires not the blood of goats and bulls, requires that of men still less. Though you have not exactly said as much as this, yet you will be considered as having said it. You who assert that the relics of the martyrs are to be trampled on, do in reality forbid that blood to be spilled, which is worthy of no honour.*'* Here is another instance of the unscrupulous conduct of Jerome when he was resolved to crush an opponent. He puts words into the mouth of Vigilantius which Vigilantius did not utter. He had nothing to advance in proof of Vigilantius having spoken contemptuously of the martyrs or of their ashes, and yet he takes upon himself to say, that a refusal to enshrine relics was tantamount to the belief and assertion that martyrdom was unnecessary and worthless in the eyes of God. But no wonder that the choleric monk, who was unsparing of Chrysostom and Augustine, should deal thus unfairly with Vigilantius for stoutly exposing the fanaticism of relic-worship. Who after this will accept the evidence of Jerome as to the heresy of Vigilantius? But

. 405, 6.

their ridiculous opinions about Cain. The names of Barbelus, and Balsamus, and Leusibora are also flung at Vigilantius, as if he partook of their absurdities. These heretics are among those enumerated by Irenæus.

* The original (see p. 406) is embarrassing as it is now pointed: 'Quod quum dixeris.' Perhaps there should be a dash after dixeris, as in Virgil. 'Quos ego—sed melius motos componere fluctus.'—Æn. i. 139.

upon his authority solely, the presbyter of the Pyrenees has been placed on the list of heretics.*

A. D. 406.

Par. 10. Vigils and nocturnal assemblies in the churches.

Vigilantius objected to the midnight assemblies in the churches, and at the graves of the martyrs, because they were conducive in many cases to scandalous immoralities. The Reformer was tender not only of the conduct but of the character of young Christians, and he well knew that much evil had resulted from the nocturnal prayer-meetings against which he protested. But everything that Vigilantius did and said must be derided and traduced: he pleads for chastity, and he is called unchaste: he advocates the cause of pure religion, and he is called a heretic: he shows that the frequent celebration of vigils and night-watchings lead to mischief, and forthwith vigils and night-watchings are defended by Jerome,—by the very man, who had before warned a matron, in whom he took an interest, not to allow her daughter to go to such meetings, except in her company, and who was well aware that many good men had foreseen and pointed out the danger.†

* Bayle has observed upon the eagerness with which calumnies against Vigilantius have been propagated. For example, Jerome said in this treatise: 'Perhaps you will pretend, after the fashion of the gentiles, and the impious Porphyry and Eunomius, that these miracles are the tricks of devils' (see supra, p. 409). Baronius took up this '*perhaps you will pretend*,' and boldly asserted that Vigilantius did so pretend. 'Idem nebulo respuens sanctorum reliquias addebat illud horrendum dictu,' &c.—Sub anno 406, § 50. Had Vigilantius said anything like this, Jerome would have been glad enough to adduce it. Lindanus, Prateolus, Gaultier, Godeau, and Moreri have repeated the same calumny.

† Hier. Op. Epis. ad Læt. 4. pars ii. p. 595.

The Council of Eliberis, canon thirty-five, expressly forbade women to be present at the pernoctations held at the tombs of the saints, because of the flagitious proceedings which frequently took place on those occasions.*

One abuse had followed another in rapid and appalling succession. First came the undue veneration of the memory of holy men: then commemorations in their honour, which savoured of religious services, such as ought to be observed to glorify the Supreme only. Next the bones and ashes of the pious dead were pronounced to be objects worthy of religious reverence, and for those search was made, and imposture after imposture accompanied their exhumation, and exposure to the public eye. The translation of relics from place to place, the divulsion of them, and the deposit of them entire, or by morsels, under altars and in churches, led to solemn processions and pilgrimages, and to all manner of extravagant display. They were wrapt in fine linen, and placed in caskets of gold and silver enriched with precious stones, and the spots where they were enshrined were approached with the utmost awe. Observances, such as the heathens were wont to love, and which certainly were imposing and captivating, found acceptance with the clergy, because they attracted the people.

* 'Placuit prohibere, ne feminæ in cœmeterio pervigilent, eo quod sæpe obtentu orationis latenter scelera committant.' In process of time these nocturnal assemblies were entirely prohibited. They became too scandalous to be tolerated (see Bellarm. de Eccl. Triumph. lib. iii.) and the objections of [illegible] were justified by events.

ights, incense, garlands, tapestry, and music, ith all that pomp and pageantry could do to well the number of reverential and admiring otaries, were exhibited at these shrines where elics were deposited. Intoxicated with the plendour of the rites by day, and awe-struck by he solemnities that continued through the night, hen vigils were kept from sun-set to sun-rise, ndividuals were found who fancied they heard ounds and saw sights of preternatural wonder. ome thought they were admonished or encouaged, or sent on extraordinary missions, by the pirit of the departed saint: others imagined they ere suddenly cured of distempers; and miracles ere forthwith said to be wrought at these conseerated places. A. D. 406.

Against each of these abuses Vigilantius protested: he called them heathen and idolatrous, and he predicted that they would lead to further corruptions. The more glaring the superstition, the stronger was his language, and when bishops and presbyters used the engine that was in their hands to give a retrograde motion to the Church, and to carry it back into paganism and materialism, he boldly told them that the signs and miracles said to be done in the churches dedicated to the martyrs might be *profitable for misbelievers, but not for the faithful.* If his book had been preserved, no doubt we should have found him saying, that where there is true faith, and where the gospel is received into an honest heart, the internal evidences of the truth are so convincing that there is no

Par. 11 False miracles.

p. 408.

A. D. 406. occasion for miraculous pretensions. A really faithful and believing servant of Jesus Christ would not think it desirable to admit ignorant and bigoted recruits, whom nothing but a show of miracles could add to the church. If men will not be moved by *preaching and teaching*, miracles are not likely to do much for them.*

The piety and good sense of Vigilantius, and the arguments he used, were met on the part of Jerome by invectives and ribaldry. Vigilantius questioned the fact, when devils were said to be exorcised by relics. 'You are possessed of a devil,' replied Jerome, 'and therefore you object to these miracles.' And the paragraph ends with indecent allusions to Mercury, and Nocturnus, and Jupiter, and Alcmena, and Bacchus, and to heathen obscenities.

Par. 12, 13. The next paragraphs are fit pendents for the preceding. The twelfth recounts the tale of the

p. 410. earthquake, and of the terror displayed on that occasion by Vigilantius, which I have fully noticed already, (see supra. p. 304—7): and the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth contain a coarse comparison between the motives which impelled Jerome to fast, and his opponent to dissuade from outward acts of mortification. Jerome

p. 411. must have had a bad cause to sustain, or he would not have filled whole pages with such balderdash as it would be a shame to transcribe unnecessarily.

Par. 14, 15. Vigilantius, who had been to Palestine, and

* See St. L[illegible] xii. 37.

who had seen what sort of company was to be met there, and what were the superstitions practised in the 'holy city' (see supra, pp. 286—289), dissuaded from sending indiscriminate alms, or making pilgrimages to Jerusalem. His reasons, and the arguments by which he supported them, are not given by Jerome with that distinctness, which would have enabled us to judge of their weight; and evidently the whole matter is distorted. One sentence on this head only has been transferred from the book of the reformer to the treatise before us: '*Every one may do this (give alms) in his own country, and there will be no scarcity of poor people (at home) to be supported by the riches of the church.*' p. 414.

A. D. 406.

Alms sent to Jerusalem.

It is hard to find fault with this sentiment, and the experience of centuries has shown that contributions, under such names as 'Peter's pence,' whether sent to Jerusalem or Rome, have fostered bigotry in those places, and dried up the sources of domestic charity. It is not to be believed that Vigilantius protested against a fair and judicious distribution to the brethren in foreign countries: his travels, and the admission which lurks in one of the clauses of these paragraphs, convince us that he generously provided, as far as he could, for the wants not only of his own nation, but of other Christian localities. '*I presume if I reply to this,*' wrote Jerome, '*you will immediately growl out, that I am pleading my own cause. You who have given gifts to all with such liberality, that unless you had come to Jerusalem, and lavished your* p. 412.

A. D. 406. *own money, or that of your patrons, we had all been in danger of starving.*' How the truth peeps out of such angry and unjust invectives as those of Jerome! Here we have an historical and biographical addition to our narrative; Jerome intimates, that when Vigilantius went to Palestine, he was the bearer of alms from Paulinus and Sulpicius, and contributed also of his own money to the wants of the brethren in the East. Jerome had previously borne unwilling witness to the liberality with which Vigilantius had spent his money in circulating sacred writings among the brethren of the Gallic churches (see supra, pp. 348, 354), which he was accused of invading (p. 394); and now he is constrained to speak of *the money he had lavished*, and *the gifts he had made* in Palestine.

.16, 17. These two paragraphs resemble, in tone and temper, the scurrilous character of the eleventh,

eticism, ıks, and bates. twelfth, and thirteenth paragraphs. The Gallic presbyter had ventured to question the expediency of asceticism, and express his doubt whether vows of celibacy and retirement to the desert conduced to Christian perfection.* '*If all*,' said he, '*should shut themselves up, and live in solitude, who would*

16. *serve the churches?*† *Who will win the men of the*

* 'If a life of fasting and self-inflicted torture and monasticism be the rule of a Bible Christian, it is obvious to ask—What becomes of the example of our blessed Redeemer, who in order to distinguish his mode of life from that of St. John the Baptist, expressly says, that "He came eating and drinking." '—*Irish Ecclesiastical Journal*, Jan. 30, 1844.

† Jerome himself refused to act as a parish priest, because he was a monk. See supra, p. 101.

*world? Who will exhort sinners to virtue? If all were virgins, there would be no marriages, the human race would become extinct.*' These mutilated passages from the book of Vigilantius are just enough to acquaint us, that the reformer argued upon the general consequences, from the practice of a few, and showed, that if the principle was as praiseworthy and indispensable to holiness as the advocates of celibacy represented it to be, then all ought to act upon it. And what would be the result? There would be an end of mankind, and the first command, "Increase and multiply," would be rendered null and void by the legislation of the Basils, and Gregorys, and Jeromes of the new school of theology.* The extravagant lessons on the virtues of monasticism were fairly met by Vigilantius in this *argumentum ad absurdum*, and Jerome felt the force of it so keenly, that he had recourse, as before, to bad jokes and slander. '*There will be no children squalling in the cradles; the unhired midwives will go a-begging, and Dormitantius, shrunk up with cold, will keep vigils in his solitary bed.*' † A.D. 406.

'*Why do you go to the desert?*' asked Vigilantius. After another sarcasm at the expense of the

* Mr. Milman has some excellent observations on the benefit which would have accrued to mankind if the holy men of the fourth century, instead of separating themselves from the world, had brought up families, and raised up a race born from Christian parents, and educated in Christian principles.—*History of Christianity*, iii. 291.

† This sort of joke was in great favour with Jerome. See supra, p. 261. 'I would advise everybody to marry who is afraid to sleep alone.'

A. D. 406. reformer,—' *For this reason, that I may not hear you, nor see you, that I may not be moved by your madness*,' Jerome proceeds, in a strain of humility and seriousness, from which it is to be wished that
p. 417. he had never departed; ' *That the eye of the harlot lead me not captive; that beauty seduce me not to unlawful embraces. This is not fighting, you will answer, but flying. Stand in the front of the battle: in your armour resist your enemies, that you may be crowned when you shall have conquered. I confess my weakness. I am unwilling to fight in the hope of victory, lest I lose the victory at the last.*'

If St. Jerome, and those who advocated celibacy, and monasticism, had confined themselves to such language as this, which was neither unscriptural nor unapostolical, there would have been no just cause of complaint. There would have been no undue value set on works of supererogation, and no monastic abuses to call aloud for reform. But they outstepped this modesty; they preached up asceticism as the indispensable bond of holiness; they erected a new standard of Christian perfection, according to an arbitrary measure of their own; and having obtained the credit of possessing superhuman virtue, they secured a degree of superhuman influence, which was abused by themselves and their successors in the pernicious system.*

* Jerome's notions of the sanctity of monastic life were such, that he speaks complacently of the filth and vermin with which certain nuns were covered, as if the system were too holy to make such things a matter of concern. Epist. ad Sabin. Oper. 4. ii. p. 757.

Again, we have an example of truth forcing her way out of the mouth of one, who seemed as if he were constrained to give evidence against himself, and the cause which he endeavoured to uphold. A.D. 406.

In the midst of the humble strain, which deserves commendation, Jerome abruptly breaks off into the following admission.

'*Mothers we designate sisters and daughters, and do not blush to cover our vices with names of devotion. What has a monk to do in the cells of women? What is the meaning of those solitary and private conversations, and eyes which avoid witnesses?*' p. 418.

Married priests were exhorted to abstain from their wives, and decrees were made about this time to enforce continence. The clergy of all orders were forbidden to associate with women, except under certain restrictions. But in spite of ecclesiastical canons, as the foregoing passage tells us, clergymen and even monks did bring scandal on the profession of celibacy, by intercourse with females, under very suspicious circumstances. Hypocrisy was added to incontinence, and consciences were seared by the regulations made for the maintenance of chastity.

Against the evils of this miserable system of outward sanctity and inward pollution, Vigilantius remonstrated. His protest gave rise to that torrent of abuse which I have now been examining: and which might well be full of misrepresentation, considering that it was, as the last paragraph explains, composed in a single night. But upon no better authority than this, and other effusions Last paragraph.

A. D. 406.

equally crude and impetuous, posterity has been invited to consign the name and character of Vigilantius to infamy; and even some Christian writers, who protest against the very errors which he condemned, have joined in the hue and cry. The apologists of Jerome, who ask to have indulgence shown to that father, on the plea that many of his objectionable vituperations were written and circulated before he had time to revise and correct them,* ought to give Vigilantius the benefit of the same plea, and to believe more favourably of a reformer, who, on the confession of his accuser, had cause to complain of many evils produced by the system which he condemned.

* On the subject of Jerome's hasty and inaccurate writings, see note to p. 320, supra. There is a passage in his letter to Pammachius, in which, in reply to the epistle of Pammachius rebuking him for his unmeasured invectives against Jovinian, he admits that many of his tirades were written without sufficiently weighing his words and sentences: and he lays the blame on friend and foe for giving them publicity in too great a hurry. 'Non sum tantæ felicitatis, quantæ plerique hujus temporis Tractatores: ut nugas meas quando voluerim emendare possim. Statim, ut aliquid scripsero, aut amatores mei, aut invidi, diverso quidem studio, sed pari certamine, in vulgus nostra disseminant: et vel in laude, vel in vituperatione nimii sunt: non meritum styli, sed suum stomachum sequentes."—Hier. Op. Epist. ad Pam. 31 alias 52. vol. 4. pars. ii. p. 243.

## NOTE TO CHAPTER XIX.

## ON THE COUNTRY OF VIGILANTIUS.

DE MARCA, DE PATRIA VIGILANTII.

I. De patria virorum illustrium certasse legimus claras civitates, singulis sibi natales eorum pertinaciter vindicantibus, ut ex splendida illorum fama suam augerent. Longe diverso consilio de Vigilantii patria disserendum, qui monstri horrendi instar in ultimas oras a nobis amandandus esset potius, quam in Gallicanæ ullius urbis civem asciscendus. Sed quia historiæ fides unam præ ceteris veritatem colit, indecorum esset in alias regiones invidiosum nomen refundere ; præsertim quum ex hominis unius sacrilegio nulla pars infamiæ patrium solum attingat. Vigilantium patria Pampilonensem docuit Joannes Vasæus in chronico. Baronius vero Calagurritanum in Hispania, teste, ut sibi videtur, locuplete Hieronymo, tam constanter asserit, ut acrius in Gennadium invehatur, quod Gallum esse scripserit in libro de scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis, cap. 35. Nos autem, qui alieni a partium studio, verum profiteri didicimus, Galliæ parenti aborsum istum, seu mavis monstrum, cum Hieronymo dicere adjudicamus ; qui in Galliis quoque hæresim suam publicavit, licet delicatiores Hispaniæ Barcinone id factum scribant.

II. Ut probem sententiam meam, vel potius Gennadii Massiliensis, adeoque Galli, non remoti ab illis temporibus scriptoris, cujus ideo auctoritatem non erat quod hac in re tam facile Baronius elevaret, nitar Hieronymi testimonio, ex cujus vera interpretatione tota pendet hujus controversiæ definitio. Quæ Gallum faciunt Vigilantium duo sunt apertissima loca, quæ nulla cavillatione subverti vel eludi possunt. Qui Calagurritanum in Hispania doceat, unus est locus : qui si conniventibus vel potius lusciciosis oculis inspiciatur, ut favere huic opinioni videtur, ita acrius intuentibus aliam omnino speciem præfert.

III. Muniamus sententiam nostram antequam alterius præsidia expugnamus. In ipso operis adversus Vigilantium exordio ait Hieronymus, multa in orbe monstra generata fuisse, quorum aliqua enumerat. Mox addit. *Triformem Geryonem Hispaniæ prodiderunt. Sola Gallia monstra non habuit, sed viris semper fortissimis et eloquentissimis abundavit. Exortus est subito Vigilantius, &c.* Nihil disertius potuit dici, ut originem hominis non in Hispania, sed in Gallia quæreremus. Sed liberat nos isto labore Hieronymus, qui ad ipsos pene hominis lares nos manu ducit. Saltem patriam liquido ait esse Convenarum urbem ad radices Pyrenæi ; quæ deductis eo Hispanarum regionum fortioribus viris, a Pompeio Magno condita est, scilicet ut

pacatiorem post discessum suum relinqueret Hispaniam. Alioqui quod magnum operæ pretium fecisset, vilem latronum et grassatorum gregem in Aquitaniæ regione includendo? Libuit tamen Hieronymo, in Vigilantium excandescenti originis illi contumeliam exprobare; arrepta ex Tito Livio locutionis occasione, qui aliquoties objurgat Hispanos quod bellantes latrocinia potius quam militiam exercerent. Sic ergo loquitur Hieronymus de Vigilantio: *Nimirum respondet generi suo, ut qui de latronum et Convenarum natus est semine, quos Cn. Pompeius, edomita Hispania, et ad triumphum redire festinans de Pyrenæi jugis deposuit, et in unum oppidum congregavit, unde et Convenarum urbs nomen accepit.* Deinde ut sciretur quibus ex Hispaniæ populis conflata erat colonorum multitudo, qui a Pompeio deducti erant, subjungit elegantem periodum, dummodo levi emendatione juvetur lectio, quæ in editionibus vitio laborat. *Huc usque*, inquit, *latrocinetur contra Ecclesiam Dei, et* (lege *nec*) *de Vectonibus, Arebacis Celtiberisque descendens, incurset Galliarum Ecclesias, portetque nequaquam vexillum Christi, sed insigne diaboli.* Ex Vectonum, Arebacorum, et Celtiberorum populis, qui vicini sunt apud Plinium, et fortitudinis fama apud veteres inclyti, delecti sunt milites, qui descendentes in Aquitaniam, Convenarum urbem incolerent; atque adeo Vigilantius indidem vetustam originem trahebat. Unde colligit acriter Hieronymus, si ex origine peti possit auctoritas latrocinii exercendi, coërcendam esse Vigilantio deprædandi licentiam et latrocinandi contra Ecclesiam Dei extra urbis suæ sinum, quæ tam infaustis auspiciis dicata est, non autem incursandi ceteras Galliarum Ecclesias vexillo Christi prælato et Christianæ fidei tessera; quum potius penes Vigilantium hæreseos auctorem et propagatorem, sit insigne diaboli, ementitus ille Christianæ religionis titulus.

IV. Subjungam tertium testimonium, quo et in Gallia ortum Vigilantium et in Galliis venenum suum sparsisse probatur. *Galliæ vernaculum hostem sustinent, et hominem moti capitis atque Hippocratis vinculis alligandum sedentem cernunt in Ecclesia.* Unde quoque conficitur, et si apud Gennadium dicatur Vigilantius parochiæ Ecclesiam rexisse in urbe Barcinonis, id referendum ad prius aliquod tempus. Familiaris fuerat vir iste sanctissimo et nobilissimo viro Paulino Nolano Episcopo, ut patet ex mutuis Paulini et Hieronymi Epistolis, qui domo Aquitanus, e Burdegala, Vigilantium Aquitanum quoque, e Convenis, socium itineris et fortasse ordinationis habere potuit; eo discrimine, ut hic a Paulino commendatus matriculæ et canoni Barcinonensi sub Presbyteri nomine adscriptus sit, Paulino interim libera et nulli Ecclesiæ adstricta ordinatione, collata, quod solis egregiis personis beneficium conferebatur, ut Paulino isti, Hieronymo nostro et paucis aliis. Ea tempestate fuerit e clero Barcino-

nensi, ut testatur Gennadius: videtur tamen postea in Galliarum Ecclesiam aliquam transmigrasse, ubi sedens docebat, quod est Episcoporum et Presbyterorum proprium. Non me latet, peregrinis sacerdotibus indultam olim facultatem ut in aliena Ecclesia populum alloquerentur, sed aliquando, non autem munere perpetuo, quod isthic videtur tribui Vigilantio. Id saltem negari non potest, blasphemias a Vigilantio propositas in Galliarum Ecclesiis. Quare dubitandum non est, sanctos Presbyteros Riparium et Desiderium Gallos fuisse, non Hispanos, ut vulgo putant, qui dolebant parochias suas vicinia istius fuisse maculatas, ut ait Hieronymus. Unde quoque colligitur, quod jam dicebam, adscriptum fuisse illa tempestate Vigilantium alicui in Galliis Ecclesiæ. Quod altero quoque diserto testimonio probatur: *Quia ad radices Pyrenæi habitas, vicinusque es Iberiæ, Basilidis antiquissimi hæretici et imperitæ scientiæ incredibilia portenta prosequeris, &c.*

V. Qui Calagurritanum ac proinde Hispanum fuisse Vigilantium existimant, eum proferunt Hieronymi locum qui hominem istum cum claro illo oratore Quintiliano committit, et Calagurritanum fuisse significat. Porro certum est Quintiliani patriam fuisse Calagurrim in Hispania. *Iste caupo Calagurritanus,* inquit, *et in perversum propter nomen viculi mutus Quintilianus, miscet aquam vino, et de artificio pristino suæ venena perfidiæ Catholicæ fidei sociare conatur.* Si aliquid intelligo in dicendi genere Hieronymiano, cognominem fuisse utriusque patriam significat, sed longissimo inter se differre intervallo; cum patria Quintiliani sit Calagurris in Hispania, coloniæ dignitate ornata quondam, Vigilantii autem sit viculus Calagurris, nempe propter urbem Convenarum. Unde aliud quoque prodit discrimen, hunc esse mutum Quintilianum, alterum vero celebrem et insigni eloquentia rhetorem. Ceterum perstringit ardelionem istum quod cauponarium exercuerit ea fide, qua solent hujus negotiationis artifices, nempe miscendo aquam vino; quam fraudem in religionis doctrinam invehere conetur, perfidiam genuinæ fidei consociando. Cauponum illud vitium faceto disticho insinuat Martialis, ludens in cauponem Ravennatem, qui fraude collegis suis contraria, vinum etiam non rogatus miscebat aquæ ob illius penuriam in urbe Ravenna; quæ paludibus cum restagnet undique, limpidæ aquæ scaturiginibus caret.

*Callidus imposuit nuper mihi caupo Ravennæ,*
*Quum peterem mixtum, vendidit ille merum.*

Petri de Marca. De Concordia Sacerdotii et Imperii, tom. v. pp. 35—38.

## CHAP. XX.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 406.

Recapitulation.

JEROME'S book against Vigilantius contained the worst that could be said of him. In it we may be assured that we have the accuser's brief before us, with the sum and substance of all he had to advance against the Reformer of Aquitain, and we can confidently affirm that Vigilantius had done nothing worthy of being branded as an heretic, or a blasphemer. Not a word is alleged in proof of his having spoken or written against any of the articles of the Apostles' Creed, or against a single point of doctrine or discipline, which the concurrent voice of scripture and tradition had proclaimed to be essential to Christianity. The utmost that we can extract from the indictment is, that he stigmatized as idolatrous and unscriptural the *adoring* homage paid to the relics and tombs of the martyrs, by their superstitious votaries;—that he objected to prayers for, and to the dead;—that he repudiated the yoke of celibacy imposed on

the clergy:—dissuaded from sending alms to Jerusalem:—and questioned the merits of asceticism. It has been urged that he made his objections with levity, but the evidence is not strong enough to convict him. The extracts from his writings are by no means unfavourable to his character, and the hearsay testimony falls to the ground for want of distinctness and precision. 'You say that Vigilantius is again opening his foul mouth, and is casting out the vilest nastiness against the relics of the holy martyrs.' (See supra p. 375.) 'You say that he abominates vigils.' (p. 380.) 'At present I am beating the air:—but if you wish that I should write a longer book against him, send the man's dirges and drivellings.' (p. 382.) So wrote Jerome to Riparius, expressing his own opinion of the weakness of the case. 'The dirges' were sent to him by Riparius,—the threatened book was penned: and we have seen what it contains. If, with no better evidence we consent to Vigilantius being enrolled among heretics, what are we to say for ourselves! Such as his are the tenets, for which the martyr-reformers of the English church died at the stake, and which our liturgy and articles set forth in the plainest language. Such as his are the tenets, which have been proclaimed at various times, and in various places, from age to age:—by Claude in Italy in the ninth century: by Waldo in France in the twelfth century: by Wycliffe in England in the fourteenth century: by Huss in Bohemia in the fifteenth century: by Luther in Germany, by Calvin in

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The weakness of Jerome's case against Vigilantius.

The tenets of Vigilantius held by our church reformers.

A. D. 406. Switzerland, by Cranmer in England, by Knox in Scotland, in the sixteenth century.

An unbroken line of clergy and doctors of the visible church avowing similar opinions, from generation to generation, has not yet been satisfactorily traced, because when power and literature were in the hands of the dominant but erring church, the voices of remonstrants were silenced, and their writings suppressed. But we discover vestiges enough, in every period of ecclesiastical history, to show that God has never left himself without a witness on these points. Until the hidden treasures of manuscript collections are fully brought to light, we must be satisfied with such statements as the following, by a distinguished ecclesiastical scholar, with whom I have the misfortune to differ on some subjects, but whose critical investigations have directed public attention to many points, which might have escaped notice; and have made me, for one, more cautious in the examination and use of authorities than I might otherwise have been.

The witnesses. ‘I have just said that if any papist should tell me that our religion was not to be found before the time of Calvin and Luther, I should be satisfied to answer him according to his folly; but I would by no means be understood to admit the truth of this statement, for I believe it to be as false as it is foolish; and feel no doubt, that, in the darkest age, there were many true, and accepted, worshippers of God. Not formed into churches, and eminently bearing their testimony

in corporate capacities *as* churches, against the see of Rome, (for then I think we should have heard more about them); but as the sheep of Christ dispersed abroad in the midst of this naughty world—known, perhaps, by this or that name of reproach; or, perhaps, the obscure and unknown, whose names were never written any where but in heaven. I doubt not that there were such, living a life of faith, and prayer, and communion with God; overlooked in the bustle of cities, and the solitude of cottages, and even shut up in what modern systems require us to consider as the strongholds of antichrist,—the cell, and the cloister. I will not shrink from avowing my belief, that many a tonsured head now rests in Abraham's bosom; and that many a frail body, bowed down with voluntary humility, and wasted with unprofitable will-worship—clothed in rags, and girt with a bell-rope, was a temple of the Holy Ghost; and that one day—a day when the follies of system, and the sins of party, and man's judgment of his fellows, will have come to an end—these, her unknown children, will be revealed to the astonishment of a church, accustomed to look back, with a mixture of pride and shame, to the days of her barrenness. She may ask, "Who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?" but she will have learned to know the seal of the living God; she will embrace them as her sons, and will find better matter of discourse than their superstition and her illumination. In the mean

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time, however, they are hidden—perhaps more completely hidden than they need be, if due pains were taken to look after them, and gather what might be known.' *

Vigilantius indicated.

I believe Vigilantius to have been one of these witnesses, who lived a life of faith and prayer, and communion with God, and that if due pains were taken to gather and sift what is recorded of him, his character might be written in shining letters. This therefore is the proper place to enquire—how could Vigilantius arrive at such a love of truth, as to advocate a simple and primitive form of worship, shorn of all attractive innovations, if he were either a fool or a carnal-minded profligate, as Jerome insinuated. A man misinstructed in scripture would have been satisfied with the gloss, which false philosophy had given to biblical precepts, and would have taken the system as he found it, on the word, and after the example of such eminent men as the ecclesiastical guides of that age; and one who indulged in objects of sense, would for

* ' Facts and Documents relating to the Ancient Albigenses and Waldenses,' by the Rev. S. R. Maitland, page 45. Since this passage was transcribed for the press, I find that it has been the subject of allusion in Mr. Elliott's ' *Horæ Apocalypticæ*,' a work which will deservedly command as much attention as any which has been published during the present century. ' I fully agree,' says Mr. Elliott, ' with the sentiment so beautifully expressed by Mr. Maitland, in his book on the Waldenses, as to the piety of many a tonsured monk, &c., only with this difference, that he would range them among the *Witnesses*, I among the members of the *Church hidden in the wilderness*,' vol. ii. p. 815.

hat very reason have preferred the saint-worship and festival-observances at the tombs and shrines of the martyrs, to the grave and sober exercises of devotion, which Vigilantius desired to see restored.* A.D. 406.

* I will state the case of Vigilantius, in the language of a writer who has shown him no favour. 'He taught that those who reverenced relics were idolaters; that continence and celibacy were wrong, as leading to the worst scandals; that lighting candles in churches during the day, in honour of the martyrs, was wrong, as being a heathen rite; that apostles and martyrs had no presence at their tombs; that it was useless to pray for the dead; that it was better to keep wealth, and practise habitual charity, than to strip one's self of one's property once for all, and that it was wrong to retire into the desert.'—(See 'Church of the Fathers,' p. 288.) The author proceeds to say,—'We know what Vigilantius (with Aerius and Jovinian) protested *against*, but not what he protested *for*.' (Did he not protest *for* more simplicity in worship, *for* less honour to be given to the creature, and *for* more glory to be given to God?) The author asks, 'Did he know anything of the "apprehensive" power of faith, or of man's proneness to consider his imperfect services, done in and by grace, as adequate to purchase eternal life?' and adds, 'There is no proof he did.' He next affirms, that most of the views and practices which Vigilantius opposed in the fourth century, 'had been held in the church in the first, second, and third.'—(p. 290.) If, as this writer contends, most of the views and practices which Vigilantius opposed were held in the first century, they must have been held by the apostles; if not, apostolical men, the immediate successors of the apostles, adopted new modes of worship, and departed from the apostolical precept and example. We are not to be satisfied with any ecclesiastical antiquity, with any views or practices which cannot be traced, by analogy at least, to the writings of the New Testament. If the enshrinement of relics, the invocation of the martyrs, prayers to the dead, the celebration of vigils, and the belief in the presence of the spirits of martyrs at their graves, had been among the views or practices of the apostles, we must have found something in the phraseology, if not in the precepts and narratives of the sacred writers, to justify the tenets which Jerome held and Vigilantius condemned. After the martyrdom of Stephen and James, is it probable that Peter and John and Paul would have been silent as to the value of their relics, and the power

churches of Gaul, and of the exer
functions as a parish priest, we are left
the path he followed, and the ment
which was at work within him. But
judgment assures us that he must have
the written oracles of God, again and
he must have undergone severe confli
could have brought himself to become t
nist of a system, supported by his dea
Primuliac and Nola, by the formidab
and by the most venerated names in th
church, as it was then constituted. Hi
the rash encounter of a vain glorious
or of a presumptuous schismatic; but
anxious struggle of one who had counte
and was strengthened from above to say
be for us, who shall be against us?'

The author of *Ancient Christianity*
that *Vigilantius does not appear to have*
*the secret reasons of the errors he den*
that he knew not how to lay the axe

of the superstitions of his times, by insisting upon those great principles of Christianity, which, when understood, exclude "*these follies in a mass.*" * A. D. 406.

How do we know that he did not insist on those great principles? We cannot show what his actual opinions were, on some subjects, or how he stated them, because all his writings have been suppressed; except those few sentences which Jerome chose to transcribe into his own pages, or to dress up after his own fashion. But look at the sound and reasonable protestations, and at the scriptural appeals, which are too prominent to be disregarded, in the scanty fragments that remain to us of this traduced Reformer, and then say, how could he unlearn 'the paganized Christianity,' in which the corrupt teaching of the doctors of the fourth century had instructed him, unless he had 'so learned Christ' as the scriptures taught him, and had been renewed in the spirit of his mind, by an act of divine grace? I cannot believe that Vigilantius began to protest against the undue veneration of relics, and the merits of vigils and mortifications, and to repudiate prayers for the intercessions of saints and martyrs, before he had acquired a full knowledge of the sufficient sacrifice, and of the only perfect mediation and satisfaction, of the Redeemer. I am persuaded, therefore, that he *did understand* the secret reasons of the errors he denounced,—that the real gospel of Christ was The extent of his views.

* Anc. Christ. No. 5, pp. 336, 337.

A.D. 406. not hidden from him,—and that he did insist upon the great principles of Christianity; for nothing else could have upheld him. The author of '*Ancient Christianity*' adds that *the protest of Vigilantius died away* (No. 3, p. 337). Fleury says the same; and Mr. Milman, in his very philosophical History of Christianity, speaks of him as a 'premature Protestant,' whose 'attempt was mistimed and unwise.'* Historical reasons might be given for a contrary opinion.

Because all Christendom was enslaved by the corruptions preached by the more eminent doctors of the church, and 'the dominant spirit of the times may be estimated by the language of wrath, bitterness, contempt, and abhorrence with which Jerome assailed him'†—I am using the language of Mr. Milman; for this very reason, I am persuaded that Vigilantius, who spoke and wrote as a believer, not as a scorner, had humbly gone to the divine oracles, and had there inquired of God after the right way, before he presumed to encounter the spirit of his age.

The mental process by which he arrived at a knowledge of the truth.

It was thus, that he must have debated within himself, ere, like David, he ventured to do battle with the giants of his time. 'I have been trying to work out my salvation with fear and trembling. I have anxiously endeavoured to profit by the example of the humble Sulpicius, and the self-denying Paulinus: but what did I see at Primuliac and Nola? The despair of

* History of Christianity, iii. p. 232. † Ibid. p. 333.

Sulpicius was as deep, and his gloom as black as before, after practising the lessons of Martin, and submitting to austerities from which the flesh shrunk; and Paulinus believed that he was standing on the verge of the bottomless pit, notstanding that he had given almost all his goods to feed the poor. And what did I witness at Jerusalem, where I looked for sanctity in perfection; and at Bethlehem, where there is scarcely an hour without its prescribed routine of complicated devotions? Was controversy less fierce in the holy city, by the side of the holy sepulchre, or was the temper better regulated in the cell of Jerome, than amongst the men whom he calls worldly-minded? The more I compare the religion of Christ, as it is professed and preached by those to whom I have looked up for guidance, with the teaching of the New Testament, the more do I find that it is in many things directly contrary to the gospel. That holy book directs me to seek for peace, not in any outward form whatever, but, in an inward trust that atonement has been made for sin. But what is this system, to which I have been directed for peace of mind, and acceptance with God? It has a show of fervency, but no repose does it secure. Miserable comforters are all they who promote it, while the judgments of God are hanging over our heads. I was used to make votive offerings to the household gods of my ancestors, when I was yet a heathen; and now I am urged to address my invocations to patron saints. Then Hercules and Ceres were the names

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I was to pronounce in supplication: now I am to implore the aid of Felix and Thecla. But after burning lights at the tomb of Felix, and keeping watch in the chapel where his relics are enshrined, has my spirit been enlightened? The word of God tells me that I may "*have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus:*" but those who profess to be the expositors of revelation say, that the desert, and the cowl, that sackcloth and ashes, and the scourge, are also means of propitiation and access to the throne of grace. In the gospel I read of no prescribed routine, and of no bodily exercise, on which I am to rely; but these doctors insist on a never-ending course of painful lip-service, and corporal infliction. Christ said, "Learn of me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls;" but now I am bidden to take another standard, and to measure myself by the hermits of Egypt and the anchorites of Syria. Christ said, "A man shall cleave unto his wife; what therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder." And so said Christ's apostle after him: "Let not the wife depart from her husband; let not the husband put away his wife."* But his servants now have propounded a new law in their councils,† and command the husband in sacerdotal orders to put away his wife. Christ rebuked those who said that Jerusalem was the place where

* 1 Cor. vii. 10.

† 'Omnibus placet ut episcopi, presbyteri et diaconi, et qui sacramenta contrectant, pudicitiæ custodes, etiam ab uxoribus se abstineant.'—Conc. Car. c. 3.

men ought to worship; but I have been exhorted to regard Jerusalem as the gate of heaven. The days, and months, and times, and years, and the weak and beggarly elements, which were lightly esteemed by the apostles, are now commended by their successors as almost indispensable observances; and little is said of the "living stones" and "spiritual house" of which the wise Master-builder is the head. The machinery of paganism remains the same; it is called, indeed, after a new name, but the multitude of intercessors and supernatural patrons and guardians, and the spots consecrated to the memory and worship of the dead, and the rites observed thereat, are not unlike. What is still more perplexing, I cannot find the love and unanimity after which I have been yearning. Jealousies, envyings, animosities, and heart-burnings are as rife, as if there had been no command to love one another. Surely there is something in these vigils, and austerities, and formal lip-services, and in the whole array of creature-worship now prevailing, which tend to make me the reverse of what I ought to be. This is the old way of the heathen, and not the new and living way of Him who is the Truth and the Life.' A.D. 406.

Doubtless it was because Vigilantius sought earnestly, by prayer and meditation, to understand the living way, that, although he was naturally a weak and unworthy instrument, yet God glorified himself by making use of him, and by opening his eyes that he might see the light

A. D. 406. shining, and might go to it. The more Jerome rails at Vigilantius, and accuses him of ignorance and foolishness, the more reason have we for believing that the power of God unto salvation was manifested in him, by bringing strength out of weakness.

## CHAP. XXI.

### MEMORIALS OF VIGILANTIUS.

A. D. 406.

"THE time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." (2 Tim. iv. 3.) And the time had come when Vigilantius found the truth of this prediction to his cost. The apostacy of the professing church was in its full career at the latter end of the fourth century—that eventful century, 'which set in storms,' ecclesiastical and political. This apostacy was exhibited in the admission of profligate and irreligious persons into the ranks of the cross, who were received on worldly motives, because of their wealth or influence, when they were notoriously defective in repentance and faith, and gave no earnest of the conversion of their hearts:—in the corruption of the holy sacraments, 'by exalting the symbol at the expense of the thing signified,'* and by treating the sacred rites as if they contained charms and amulets of infallible potency, inseparable from the outward ad-

The testimony of witnesses like Vigilantius was predicted, as consequent on the apostacies of the fourth century.

* Waddington's History of the Church.

A. D. 406.

ministration:—in the monastic multiplication of devotional exercises and ceremonies, until ritualistic forms came to be considered of the same value as that devout action of the soul, demanded by the revealed word of God:—in the substitution of bodily for spiritual mortifications:—in the adoption of heathen superstitions, instead of the pure and simple services enjoined by the New Testament; such as the burning of incense, the use of lamps by day, pictures and idolatrous emblems, the consecration of relics, the introduction of processions, the invocation of the dead, the religious homage paid to the memory and burial-places of the martyrs, and the prevalence of fictions and legends of saints, which eventually led to the discontinuance of scripture reading. These things put out of men's minds the saving truth of Christ's one sufficient sacrifice, of his only mediation, and obscured the doctrine of justification by faith; while they directed attention to works of supererogation, to imaginary intercession, and to unscriptural notions of reconciliation and acceptance. But as the apostacy was not to proceed without some to witness against it for the truth of God, Providence, as I have endeavoured to show in the preceding pages, was pleased to strengthen a feeble instrument like Vigilantius, and to enable him to "keep the commandments of God, and to have the testimony of Jesus Christ." * By divine grace he stood forth, and proclaimed that the ec-

* Rev. xii. 17.

clesiastical system of his time was more in accordance with heathen mythology, than with the simplicity of the gospel. A. D. 406.

For this he was denounced as a heretic, 'whose tongue ought to be cut out, and torn into morsels and shreds.' And Jerome, not satisfied with this denunciation, urged the bishop of the diocese in which Vigilantius officiated, 'to dash him in pieces with his apostolic rod, his rod of iron, and to deliver him for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved.' There can be no doubt that Jerome desired to see the secular arm raised against the Gallic reformer, as it had been, a few years before, against the Priscillianists; for, in his letter to Riparius, he quoted several scriptural examples of death inflicted on the sacrilegious, and applied them to the case of Vigilantius. Here, then, we have a further step in the departure from pure gospel principles and Christian love; another sign of the times, and proof of apostacy. The war had begun, between infallible authority and the right of religious inquiry—the exercise of reason, conscience, and faith. The argument rested no longer on the word of God, but on the will of the church, as interpreted by individuals, and on the production of miracles in support of their interpretation. Vigilantius was not to question the propriety of that which a dominant party in the church propounded. He was to be branded as a blasphemer, and to be delivered over to the secular arm for punishment, because he presumed to say that the practices of certain ecclesiastical

pp. 340, 379.

Vigilantius a witness in sack-cloth. p. 377.

Persecution.

A. D. 406.

leaders were more consistent with paganism than the gospel. Truly was Vigilantius a witness in sackcloth; first, when he was accused of immorality and sacrilege, as the early Christians were accused before him, and as almost all Christian reformers have been since, without any satisfactory proof of the charges brought against them; and, secondly, when he was exposed to oppression and persecution.

at was result of me's eedings nst ilantius?

The result of Jerome's attempt to silence and crush Vigilantius, by slandering him, and calling for his destruction, is not exactly known; for, in fact, Jerome's treatise against him is the last contemporaneous historical notice extant, and his fate is involved in mystery.

According to the opinion of some, Exuperius, bishop of Tholouse, who refused, in the first instance, to take any part against Vigilantius, and was even said to favour him, was eventually induced, by the invectives of Jerome and the advice of Pope Innocent I., to have him banished from Aquitain.*

erent ions. ished?

* 'Exupere évêque de Toulouse aiant eu occasion de consulter le pape Innocent I. sur plusieurs difficultez, lui écrivit en même-tems au sujet des mêmes erreurs que Vigilance répandoit dans son diocèse, et entr'autres sur la continence des prêtres que cet hérétique combattoit. Ce pape lui rèpondit le 20 de Fevrier de l'an 405, et satisfit à tous les articles de sa lettre, en sorte que ce saint évêque, qui jusqu'alors paroissoit avoir usé de condescendance envers Vigilance, le chassa de son église. Ce fut sans doute dans ce tems-la que cet hérétique se retira du côté de Barcelonne où il fut pourvû d'une cure. Ripaire et Didier suivant le mouvement de leur zele envoierent alors à St. Jerôme tous les écrits de Vigilance que ce saint docteur leur avoit demandez [redacted] en chargerent Sisinnius, moine

A. D. 406.

According to a second conjecture,* which has been strangely mixed up with the preceding, Vigilantius retracted his heretical tenets, and quietly sunk into obscurity. This has obtained countenance, because his name does not figure among the heretics excommunicated by any contemporary council, or in the lists of Epiphanius, Augustine, or Isidore.†

Silenced?

du diocèse de Toulouse, qu' Exupere son évêque envoioit à ce même docteur, avec une lettre et des charitez pour les solitaires de Jerusalem et d'Egypte. Ce fut durant le peu de séjour que Sisinnius fit en Orient, que S. Jerôme travailla à la réfutation des ouvrages de Vigilance, et au Commentaire sur le prophète Zacharie qu'il dédia à Exupere autant par amitié que par estime. Quoique Vigilance ne fût plus, à ce qu'il paroit, dans les Gaules lorsque Sisinnius revint d'Orient, chargé de la réfutation que S. Jerôme avoit faite des erreurs de cet hérétique, Ripaire ne laissa pas de s'en servir avantageusement pour combattre cet ennemi de la foi, non obstant son credit et la faveur de ses partisans aupres des puissances du siecle.'—Vaissette's Histoire Générale de Languedoc, Liv. iii. pp. 152, 153.

* Mosheim says that Vigilantius soon found that nothing but his silence could preserve his life. Cent. 5. § 14.

† ' Cæterum doctissimorum quorumdam virorum opinio fuit, hæreticum hunc post sparsos diffusosque errores suos tandem resipuisse, eo quod forte episcopus ejus, a. S. Hieronymo publicis scriptis increpitus, quod in sinu suo foveret hæreticum, facile illum expulit; unde nata occasio ut *Vigilantius* in diocœsim Barcinon sese receperit, in qua ecclesiam regendam obtinuit. Opinionis hujus Vigilantio propitiæ fundamentum subministrat pastoralis ea cura illi demandata una cum hæresis extinctione; neque enim post vulgata scripta S. Hieronymi quidquam ulterius de hæresi illa rescitum est. Vide auctores historiæ literariæ Gallic, t. ii. p. 57, etc."—Natalis Alexandri, Hist. Eccl. tom. ix. note, p. 27.

' Il se peut aisément faire que le reproche que S. Jerôme avoit fait à son évêque des 404 dans sa lettre à Ripaire, portât ce Prélat à l'obliger de quitter ensuite les Gaules. Ce fut pour cela sans doute, qu'il se retira dans le Diocèse de Barcelone, ou il fut chargé du soin d'une Eglise, comme Gennade le rapporte. Cette nouvelle dignité dont Vigilance fut revêtu, jointe à l'extinction de son hérésie, est un

A. D. 406.

Or killed in massacre by the Vandals?

A third opinion supposes that Vigilantius perished in that formidable tempest of the barbarians from Germany, which, as Gibbon says, after having been for some years suspended on the frontier, burst at last over the provinces of Gaul. This was the most probable termination of his life, and of his resistance to the increasing corruptions of the church: but the assertion of Baronius, that the heresy of Vigilantius was the cause of God's judgment, in visiting Gaul with the terrible scourge of the Goths and Vandals, and that the Barbaric sword put an end to that which Jerome denounced, is merely empty declamation.* The invading host spared neither reputed orthodoxy nor heterodoxy,† and Salvian, as I have before shown, imputed the universal chastisement to the unfaithfulness of the church, and not to the prevalence of heresy.‡

I am inclined to think that Exuperius may have been persuaded to withdraw his countenance from Vigilantius, after the Treatise of Jerome and the Pastoral Letter of Pope Innocent, on the

fondement légitime pour croire, ou qu'il s'en sera rétracté publiquement, ou qu'il l'aura abandonnée d'une manière tacite, mais sincère et sans réserve.'—Histoire Litéraire de la France, vol. ii. p. 62.

* 'Such was the answer of St. Jerome against Vigilantius, whose heresy apparently had no continuance; nor do we find that there was any need of a council to condemn it, so entirely was it opposed to the tradition of the universal church.' § 'It was finally crushed by the Vandal invasion.' (Baron. an. 406, c. 52.)—Fleury's Eccl. Hist. Ox. Trans. vol. ii. p. 128.

† Barbe. ‡ Supra, p. 369, 370.

§ Note by translator.

celibacy of the clergy, and that he crossed the Pyrenees in consequence, and retired to Barcelona. I cannot account in any other way for the statement of Gennadius, who recorded of him that he served a church in Barcelona; nor can I fix upon any other period when he could have had charge of a parish in that locality. The words of Gennadius* are these, 'In Hispania Barcinonensis parochiæ ecclesiam tenuit.' *He had the charge of a church in the parish (or diocese) of Barcelona.* But Gennadius did not say that he was ordained in Barcelona, as De Marca intimates, (see supra, p. 452, note). On the contrary, inasmuch as Gennadius represents him to have had a church in Barcelona, and as he appears to have been unsettled, and without any fixed charge, when he was first ordained, we must consider his location in Barcelona to have been an event long subsequent to his admission to holy orders. Vaissette, Tillemont, the authors of 'Histoire Litéraire de la France,' and Natalis Alexander lean to this opinion. (See supra, note, p. 471.) We can follow him from place to place as an unsettled presbyter, from the supposed year of his ordination in 395 (see supra, p. 205) to his return to his own country in 397: and in 404, and 406, we find him stationed in the diocese of Exuperius, at the foot of the Pyrenees. There is no explaining how he became a resident parish priest in Barcelona, unless it were at the invitation of one of the

A. D. 406.

Most probably he retired to Barcelona.

* Catal. Scrip. Eccles. 35.

A. D. 406-9. Spanish bishops, who agreed with him in his notions on clerical continence,* and who placed him in a church at Barcelona after his departure from Aquitain. The latter event was more likely to have been the result of some quiet understanding with Exuperius,† than of any severe interdict,

* 'These were the errors of Vigilantius; and there were even bishops who followed them, especially in the point of continence, on the ground of its proving a cause of licentiousness. They would only admit married persons to deacon's orders; and this probably was the occasion of the correspondence of the bishops of Spain with pope St. Siricius, and of the bishops of Gaul with pope St. Innocent.'—Fleury's Eccl. Hist. Ox. Trans. vol. ii. p. 126.

'Gennade dit qu'il gouverna une église dans le diocèse de Barcelone, et Saint Jerome luy attribue la mesme fonction dans les Gaules. Peutestre que depuis que Saint Jerome eut écrit contre luy en l'an 406, le Saint Evesque sous lequel il estoit dans les Gaules, ou les ravages des barbares, l'obligèrent de quitter les Gaules et de se retirer à Barcelone.'—Tillemont, tome xii. p. 193.

† There can be no doubt that Vigilantius was the victim of intolerance and clamour, if not of direct persecution, at the instigation of Jerome, who did not scruple to use the most foul and calumnious language against him; and that he was obliged to retire from one scene of peril to another, until he fell a sacrifice to the violence of that fell destroyer from the north, who was permitted to ravage Christendom for her sinfulness. If Exuperius had anything to do with the removal of Vigilantius from the diocese of Thoulouse, it must have been reluctantly, and after the importunities of Jerome, and his complaint of the indulgence shewn to Vigilantius, had been supported by the epistle of Pope Innocent to Exuperius, in the year 405. That epistle has been called a *decretal*, as if the bishop of Rome had jurisdiction over the bishop of Thoulouse; but the tone of *gentle advice, not of pontifical authority*, exhibited in the following extract, will shew what was the nature of the still unsettled question of clerical celibacy, and of episcopal counsel from Rome. '*Consulenti* tibi, frater carissime, quid de proposita specie unaquaque sentirem, pro captu intelligentiæ meæ quæ sunt visa respondi, quid sequendum vel deculis ratio persuaderet, vel auctoritas lectionis ostenderet, vel custodita series temporum demonstraret. Proposuisti quid de

or of a formal act of banishment: for had he been visited with any degrading sentence, it would surely have been noticed by Jerome or Gennadius. A. D. 406-9.

his observari debeas quos in diaconii ministerio, aut in officio presbyterii positos incontinentes esse, aut fuisse generati filii prodiderunt. De his, et divinarum legum manifesta est disciplina, et beatæ recordationis viri Siricii episcopi monita evidentia commearunt, ut incontinentes in officiis talibus positi omni honore ecclesiastico priventur, nec admittantur accedere ad ministerium, quod sola continentia oportet impleri.—Si qui autem scisse formam vivendi missam a Siricio detegentur, neque statim cupiditates libidinis abjecisse, illi sunt modis omnibus submovendi: quia post admotionem cognitam, præponendam arbitrati sunt voluptatem.'—Innocentii Papæ. 1. Epistola iii. ad Exuperium Episcopum Tolosanum. Con. Lab. vol. ii. Lutetiæ Parisiorum. MDCLXXI. p. 1254.

Barbeyrac, in his '*Traité de la Morale des Pères*,' has contended that Jerome, for want of a good case against Vigilantius, had recourse to the most scandalous falsehoods. He argues that, if the Gaul had really treated the ashes, or the memory of the martyrs, with dishonour,—if he had said or written anything irreverently of the Saviour, of the prophets, or the apostles, or of holy men of his own or earlier times,—if he had published any rash work, which savoured of the infidel or the scorner,—if he had sneered at any evangelical services of religion, or at any sober, devotional exercises of devotion, or acts of self-denial,—the proofs of such delinquency would have been exultingly produced, and Jerome's pages, instead of abounding in mere insinuations, would have exhibited copious transcripts from the libellous writings of the sceptical presbyter. Barbeyrac proceeds with the keenest irony to expose not only the maliciousness of Jerome's conduct, but also the weakness of his reasoning. Christ recommended watchfulness and prayer. Our Lord passed whole nights in prayer; and these, says Barbeyrac, are the monk's reasons, why young men and women, instead of having recourse to private devotions, should assemble by troops at midnight, at the risk of committing the sins which he himself acknowledged were not uncommon: which the experience of 200 years had proved to be a scandal to the church, and which Tertullian had bewailed as an intolerable nuisance, when these perilous nocturnal assemblies first came into practice. '*Quis nocturnis convocationibus, si ita oportuerit, à latere suo adimi (conjugem suam) libenter feret? Quis denique solennibus Paschæ*

D. 6-9. Be it how it may, the bare fact of Vigilantius being appointed to a church in Barcelona is favourable to his moral character, and to the belief that he had not forfeited the good opinion of the amiable Paulinus, opposed though he was to the superstitious practices of that pious man; for at Barcelona Paulinus was ever held in the highest estimation.

pe- How long he remained in safety at Barcelona in lona is among the uncertainties of his history. Most al mas- likely he perished about the year 409, in the first irruption of the northern invaders, when they passed from Gaul to Spain: and in that massacre, which, unsparing of age, sex, or sanctity, swept young and old, clergy and laity, into one indiscriminate grave, and put an end to the warning

*abnoctantem securus sustinebit?*' Tertul. ad Uxor. lib. 2. c. 4. In evidence of Jerome's habitual practice of maligning his adversary, of wresting and perverting an opponent's words to his own purpose, and even of inventing and putting words into his opponent's mouth, to raise a clamour against him, Barbeyrac cites a remarkable passage, in which Jerome, to defame and vilify Jovinian, makes Jovinian utter sentiments which are so gross, that they are incapable of being expressed in a translation. The passage occurs towards the end of Jerome's second treatise against Jovinian. The reader who will take the trouble to refer to that treatise, will see why I do not pollute my pages with the offensive sentences, and will say with Barbeyrac, that it is easy to divine why Jerome did not give copious extracts from his adversary's book, instead of garbling and distorting it. See Barbeyrac's '*Traité de la Morale des Pères*,' chap. 15, from page 250—280, 4to. ed. Amsterdam, 1728. I cannot refrain from adding to the observations contained in this note, that a divinity professor of one of our English Universities, not less distinguished by his calm and dispassionate judgment than by his extensive knowledge of ecclesiastical history, has more than once expressed his opinion that Jovinian and Vigilantius were the reverse of the characters described by Jerome.

voice of the presbyter Vigilantius—'the protestant of his age.' * A. D. 406-9.

Enquiry as to the effects produced by the protest of Vigilantius.

But did the effects of his protest survive Vigilantius? Was there any perpetuation of the principles for which he lifted up his voice? If those principles were in accordance with the everlasting truth of God's revealed word, beyond all doubt the seed which he sowed did fall on some ground, which retained and reproduced it, in conformity with the eternal promise. The bare fact that Jerome had recourse to expedients of falsehood and oppression, to silence a witness of such humble pretensions, as the presbyter of an obscure parish at the foot of the Pyrenees, is of itself a sign that the cause of the calumniator was bad, and that of the calumniated was good. We know that Augustine himself would have taken a more active part in exposing the abuses and the idolatrous tendency of saint and relic worship, had he not been deterred by the fear of stirring up evil and angry passions. 'I dare not,' said he, 'condemn many practices of this sort more freely, because I must take care not to excite scandal in some persons who are holy, and in others who are turbulent.' †

We know also that the council of Carthage

* Gibbon.

† 'Etiamsi multa hujusmodi, propter nonnullarum vel sanctarum, vel turbulentarum personarum, scandala devitanda liberius improbare non audeo.'—Epist. Aug. ad Jan. 55. 'Honorandi ergo sunt propter imitationem, non adorandi propter religionem.' 'Such was his too feeble remonstrance against the religious honour paid to martyrs, in another place.'—De Ver. Rel. c. 55. § 108.

A. D. 406-9.

would have pronounced more emphatically, in condemning the flagrant abominations attendant upon the search for relics of the martyrs,—upon the exhumation, the removal, and consecrations of them,—if there had not been an apprehension of popular tumults arising out of the prohibition of these practices.* None, however, had courage to resist the increasing mischief, but men who, like Vigilantius, were especially strengthened by God to do so. In opposition, therefore, to opinions which are not to be received with disrespect, I maintain that this struggle of Vigilantius against a corrupt ecclesiastical system, was followed by consequences important to pure religion throughout the whole of the region, to which his labours, while living, were extended; and that many who received and adhered to his tenets, secretly transmitted them to others, in such a manner that his doctrine was perpetuated. No doubt these recipients of the truth were publicly borne down by the superior influence of that strong party in the church, whose credit for learning, talent, austerity, and

* 'Item placuit, ut altaria quæ passim per agros, et per vias, tanquam memoriæ martyrum constituuntur, in quibus nullum corpus, aut reliquiæ martyrum conditæ probantur, ab episcopis, qui locis eisdem præsunt, si fieri potest, evertantur: si autem hoc per populares tumultus non sinitur, plebes tamen admoneantur, ne illa loca frequentent; at qui recta sapiunt, nullâ ibi superstitione devincti teneantur: et omnino nulla memoria martyrum probabiliter acceptetur, nisi ubi corpus aut aliquæ reliquiæ sunt, aut origo alicujus habitationis, vel possessionis, vel passionis, fidelissimâ origine, traditur. Nam quæ per somnia, et per inanes quasi revelationes quorumlibet hominum ubicunque constituuntur altaria, omni modo improbentur.'—Conc. Carth. Can. xiv.

devout zeal, exalted them to high places and authority. In every age there are persons who love to have the pre-eminence, and whose bold, uncompromising tone, whose use of an ecclesiastical shibboleth, whose sophistry, and language of gentleness or severity, as occasion may require, give them an advantage over those, who desire to have every religious canon and custom tried by the unerring rule of scripture. The loud voice of error is always more popular than the still small voice of truth. Under error and clamour, Vigilantius sunk, but it does not therefore follow that his teaching fell to the ground void, and was of none effect.

A. D. 406-9.

Opinions on the discontinuance of the protest of Vigilantius.

Baronius and the Oxford editors of Fleury assert that the *heresy* of Vigilantius 'was finally crushed by the Vandal invasion.' *

Fleury says, 'It had apparently no continuance.' † Mosheim observes that 'the efforts of Vigilantius were utterly ineffective.' ‡ Gibbon, that 'his protest, though calm and reasonable, died away.' §

Mr. Milman's opinion, and that of the author of 'Ancient Christianity' to the same effect, have already been mentioned. ‖ Dean Waddington, in his valuable 'History of the Church,' takes nearly the same view. 'The good Vigilantius deemed it wiser to retire from the conflict, than to expose

* Oxford Trans. of Fleury, vol. ii. p. 128, note.
† Fleury, book xxii. c. 6. ‡ Mosheim, vol. ii. p. 45. 8vo. edit.
§ Gibbon's Rom. Emp. vol. iii. p. 95. 4to. edit.
‖ See supra, p. 462.

A. D. 406-9.

himself to unprofitable martyrdom. And, in fact, we find that his heresy (so it was designated), gained so little ground, that the interference of a council was not required to extinguish it.'* To all appearance, the remonstrants who agreed with Vigilantius were silenced; and no wonder. Twenty years before, a law had been made by Theodosius the Great, by the advice of his more sober ecclesiastical counsellors, to prevent the exhumation of dead bodies,† and the translation of them from one place to another; and yet the influence of the *cinerarii* had become so great, that when Vigilantius was protesting against the abuses which grew out of relic-worship, almost the whole Christian population 'from Palestine to Chalcedon,'‡ was engaged in accompanying the supposed remains of Samuel to their new place of deposit. But though the ship of the Church was in full sail, after the death of Vigilantius, and making its way by favour of wind and tide, there was an under-current beyond the control of the Jeromes and monks of the East, and the Innocents, and Leos, and Gregories of Rome, which was slowly, but certainly, carrying the little bark of Reformation to the haven, which it finally reached. In the events of a gracious Providence the districts where Vigilantius resided, or which he occasionally visited, viz. the recesses of the Pyrenees, and the Cottian Alps, and the plains of

The principles asserted by Vigilantius may be traced in the regions where he protested, from the 5th to the 16th century.

* Waddington, p. 176.

† Cited by Barbeyrac, 'Traité de la Morale des Péres,' p. 260.

‡ See supra, p. 397.

the south of Gaul and of Lombardy, from the date of his disappearance to the day-break of the Reformation, were permitted to shed forth, from time to time, sparklings and glimmerings of the same light which illumined his path, and to show that the embers which he helped to keep alive were never extinguished. It is not here meant to assert that a new interpretation of the gospel propounded by Vigilantius was preached after his death, but that the primitive doctrines which he was instrumental in reviving, in the vicinity of the Pyrenees and the Alps, were not lost when he perished. His adversary informs us, that he declaimed between the Cottian Alps and the Adriatic sea,—that he made incursions into the Gallic churches,—indoctrinated the parishes at the foot of the Pyrenees,—employed scribes and copyists, and circulated an overwhelming quantity of transcripts from sacred writings. Now connecting these two facts together, first that Vigilantius assailed these regions with his preaching and his books, (Oh, for one page of Vigilantius! 'I would gladly give up,' said Milner, 'the whole invectives of Jerome and Rufinus for a single page of Vigilantius or Jovinian;') * and secondly, that these are the regions from which the so-called poison of his heresy has never been thoroughly banished; can we say that his protest died away, had no continuance, was premature, or ineffectual? With Him, to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday, the

A. D. 406-9.

* Church History, vol. ii. p. 480.

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appeal and the remonstrance of Vigilantius were for eternity, and not for time; and He whose paths are in the deep, who works by agencies invisible to the human eye, did of a certainty provide secret means of circulating and perpetuating the doctrines upheld by Vigilantius: which indeed were not his only, but those of the witnesses who have 'prophesied, clothed in sackcloth,' during ages of persecution, from the earliest times of Christianity. The vitality preserved in the south of Gaul, between the Pyrenees and the Alps, was manifested by such occasional indications of spiritual life as those given by Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, in the sixth century, when he commanded the images to be destroyed, which were set up in the churches of his diocese.

Image worship opposed in the south of Gaul.

Alcuin and the Gothic Christians of Aquitain.

The Gothic Christians of Aquitain, whom Alcuin* mildly rebuked in the eighth century for their dislike of auricular confession, and for certain customs, which were of inveterate standing in their regions, may also be adduced in evidence of a state of things resembling the purity

* Dilectissimis viris, fratribus et patribus in provincia Gothorum, Humilis Ecclesiæ Christi Vernaculus Alcuinus divinam salutem. Plurima vestræ sagacitatis et religionis laus nostris sæpius insonuit auribus, seu propter sacratissimam monachorum vitam, seu propter laicorum religiosam conversationem, dum illi, ab omni strepitu sæcularis inquietatis, soli Deo vacare desiderant, et isti, inter mundanas occupationes castissimam vitam degere dicuntur. Nos quoque mutuo caritatis officio vestræ sanctitati aliquantulas admonitionis literulas dirigere curavimus, propter quasdam consuetudines, *quæ vestris inolevisse fertur regionibus.* Dicitur vero neminem e laicis suam velle confessionem [illegible] Alcuini Epistola 26, aliter 71. ad Gothos.

and simplicity which Vigilantius endeavoured to restore to the church. Alcuin praised their wisdom, their piety, the religious life of their laity, and the sanctity of their monks, at the same time that he alluded to some want of conformity with the dominant church, which at that period was departing further and further from primitive Christianity. In the following century Theodulphus, Bishop of Orleans, pointed attention to a little community at Narbonne,* which has been described, by one whose attention has been given deeply to these subjects, 'as a fit nucleus for the lesser star, whose rays shone brighter and brighter till it was swallowed up by the day-star of the Reformation.'†

A. D. 406-9.

Theodolphus and the community at Narbonne.

On the other side of the Alps, and in the very territory, where Vigilantius had inveighed against Jerome and his errors, a strong movement was made between the years 817 and 840, headed by Claude, Bishop of Turin,‡ the object of which was to promote the same reform in the church, which the Gallic presbyter had attempted to effect four

Claude, Bishop of Turin.

* 'Mox sedes Narbona tuas, urbemque decoram
Tangimus, occurrit quo mihi læta cohors,
Reliquiæ Getici populi, simul Hespera turba
Me consanguineo fit duce læta sibi.

Unde revisentes te, Carcassona, Redasque,
Mœnibus inferimus nos cito, Narbo, tuis;
Undique conveniunt populi clerique catervæ,
Et synodus clerum lex regit alma forum.'

Theodulphi Parænesis ad Judices.

† G. Metevier.

‡ 'One real Christian—Claudius, bishop of Turin, the Protestant of the ninth century.'—Waddington, p. 268.

A. D. 406-9.

hundred years before. The protestation of Claude was against the abuse of relics, images, the wood of the cross, pilgrimages, and saint-worship. Now although it is not in our power to produce the links of the broken chain of succession, which are required to unite Vigilantius and Claude in the same perpetuated scheme of ecclesiastical reformation, yet it is worthy of more than ordinary reflection to discover, that we are again upon the footsteps of Evangelists, whose mission was to deliver the unadulterated word of God. We find ourselves in the track of Christian teachers unlike those of 'the Church of the Fathers,' and of modern Rome, and not only resembling, but absolutely stated to be, followers of the sect of Vigilantius. By his own contemporaries, Claude was charged with promulgating the doctrine of Vigilantius. In two treatises written against Claude in the ninth century, the one by Jonas, Bishop of Orleans, and the other by Dungalus, distinct mention is made of what the authors called the heresy of Vigilantius: and this heresy is said to have prevailed in parts of the diocese of Turin, and to have been encouraged by Bishop Claude.* I am not here professing to see 'a

Dicitur etiam Claudium eundem adversus reliquias sanctorum, non contemnendas (utpote, quorum mors preciosa in conspectu [illegible] eorumque sepulchra, ut à sanctis patribus traditum est, [illegible] quasdam nefanda dogmatizasse, et usque nunc dogmatizare. [illegible] manifestè non indicet, ex his tamen [illegible] fidelium relatione, ita se rem [illegible] verisimile videtur hujus novitii [illegible] animabus priscorum com-

church' in the Cottian Alps, (according to the sense of that word as used by ecclesiastical writers) in a state of nonconformity with the national churches of Gaul and Italy, in the ninth century: because I cannot produce historical authority for the separation of the ancestors of the Waldenses of Piedmont from the churches in communion with Rome before the year 1208, when they were excommunicated, anathematized, and delivered over to fire and sword. Had there been a community in the Cottian Alps in the time of Claude, like that of Narbonne, mentioned by Theodulphus; or like that, to which Alcuin addressed the letter to which I have just referred, I think Claude, or Jonas of Orleans, or Dungalus would have described it more plainly. Their references point to *protesting* individuals, and not to a *seceding* church; especially that of Dungalus; when he speaks of the people in the diocese of Turin being divided into two parts, the one adhering to doctrines inculcating the use of pictures and images in churches, and the worship of saints and relics, and the other condemning them as erroneous and idolatrous.* A. D. 406-9.

pactam, atque uno corpori indeptam, Vigilantii videlicet et Eustathii, qui (ut verbis Sedulii utamur) ambo errore pares, quanquam sunt diversa secuti. Licet enim in plurimis ab alterutro desciverint, in contemnendis tamen sanctorum martyrum reliquiis, eorumque sepulchris dehonorandis, et nonnullis ecclesiasticis traditionibus reprehendendis, unum perversissimè senserunt.'—Jonæ Aurelianensis Episcopi, De Cultu Imaginum, lib. i. p. 538, vol. iv. Bib. Patr. Paris, 1624.

'Ille vero Eunomianus et Vigilantianus omnium sanctorum adversarius et blasphemator,' &c.—Dungalus adv. Claud. Taur. ibid. p. 197.

* 'Simili modo etiam nunc sequestrato ab invicem in hac regione,

A. D. 1100.

Three hundred years afterwards, in the twelfth century, we trace the same religious sentiments avowed in the books of Alpine witnesses called *Vaudés;** and although these witnesses also may not have been a church, in a corporate capacity, yet who can deny that the humble families of the valleys, who bore this name of reproach, were worthy of being saluted in the same character, as the church that was in the house of Nymphas, or in that of Aquila and Priscilla? Such of their treatises as may be considered genuine, and bear the stamp of the twelfth century, would do honour

In the Vaudois the Cottian Alps.

ac diviso in duas partes populo, de observationibus ecclesiasticis: hoc est, de imagine dominicæ passionis, et sancta pictura murmurantes et contendentes. Catholici dicunt bonam et utilem esse eam picturam, et pene tantum proficere ad eruditionem, quantum et sacræ litteræ: hæreticus è contra eam partem à se seducta dicunt, non: sed seductio est erroris et idololatria. Talis de cruce contentio habetur, Catholicis dicentibus, quod bona et sancta sit. Vexillumque triumphale, et signum perpetuæ salutis; pars adversa cum suo magistro è contra respondet, non, sed opprobrium tantum passionis et irrisio mortis in ea continetur et ostenditur, ac memoratur. Pari ratione de memoriis sanctorum, causa orationis adeundis, et reliquiis eorum venerandis obnituntur: aliis adfirmantibus bonam et religiosam esse consuetudinem basilicas martyrum frequentare, ubi eorum sacri cineres et sancta corpora quasi quædam venerabilia vasa et Deo acceptabilia, in quibus omnigena pro fide Christi tormenta sunt usque ad mortem perpessi: cum honore eorum meritis congruo condita habentur, ubique ipsis intervenientibus corporales ac spirituales quotidie languores, divina operante manu et gratia coruscante, copiosissimé et præsentissimé sanantur: alii vero resistunt dicentes sanctos post obitum nullum adjuvare, nullique posse intercedendo succurrere, nihil eorum duntaxat scientes, quæ in terris geruntur, illorumque reliquias nullam alicujus reverentiæ gratiam comitari, sicut nec ossa vilissima quorumlibet animalium reliquamve terram communem.'—Dungali. Resp. con. Claud. Taur. p. 153. Bib. Patr. 1624.

:o any age of Christianity: and if they were written, as I believe them to have been, in the midst of ill-usage and oppression, the meek endurance, and the evangelical temper, which they display, are characteristic of men, who were not destitute of the means of spiritual sustenance.* The broadly-marked principles asserted by Claude and Vigilantius pervade almost all these treatises; and most readers will rise from a study of them im- A. D. 406-9. Conclusion

* I am tempted here to say a few words on the subject of the documents called the Waldensian manuscripts. Recent researches have convinced me that many of the treatises under this name, whose genuineness has been doubted, are extremely valuable, as being the transcripts of writings of a very remote period, and the depositories of doctrines which could not have originated with a race of mountain shepherds and herdsmen. The unfaithfulness of Perrin, and the ignorance of Leger and Morland, have done much towards shelving the whole collection. But on examining a fasciculus of the manuscripts formerly belonging to Archbishop Usher, and now in possession of Trinity College, Dublin, I have discovered internal evidences of antiquity, which cannot be disputed. For example, the calmness and simplicity of several of the treatises, and the total abstinence from all vindictive, violent, and sectarian expressions, show that they were composed at a juncture before the writers had separated from the dominant church. They are the productions of different periods: some, which Perrin assigned to the twelfth century, are clearly the composition of the fourteenth and fifteenth century: in others, there are indications of adherence to practices and customs which were afterwards repudiated, when the Waldenses formed a separate communion: others are not only entirely free from marks of modernity, but contain proofs that they are copies of the treatises which Reiner and Stephen de Borbone had seen about the year 1250, Moneta about 1240, and Walter Mapes and Lucas Tudensis at an earlier date. I shall take another opportunity of going into details to establish this point. Suffice it to say at present, that admitting all which has been advanced against Perrin, the authenticity of the most important of the Waldensian MSS. is confirmed, rather than vitiated, by his blundering and dishonest use of part of the collection.

A. D. 406-9. pressed with the persuasion, that the tenets, maintained by the Gallic reformer in the fourth century, and at the beginning of the fifth, were successively held from age to age by persons of a kindred spirit, in the regions where 'he declaimed;' and that seeds sown by his hand, in common with those of other witnesses, were preserved by means hidden to man, but known to God, until "*they brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.*"

THE END.

DITTON, SURREY.